THE SOPHA:

A MORAL TALE.

Translated from the FRENCH Original *of Monsieur* CREBILLON.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is now ſome Ages ſince a Prince, named *Schah-Baham*, reigned over the *Indies*. He was Grandſon of the Magnanimous *Schah-Riar*, whoſe great Actions are recorded in the *Thouſand and One Nights*, and who, among other Things, took ſo much Delight in ſtrangling his Wives, and in hearing of Tales; even he, who extended the Royal Grace to the incomparable *Scheherazade*, in conſideration alone of the Hiſtorical Treaſures ſhe was Miſtreſs of.

Whether *Schah-Baham* was not very tenacious of his Honour, or whether his Wives were not ſo liberal of their Favours to their *Negroes*, or whether they took care to keep the Secret from him, (which is not the leaſt probable) certain it is, he was an eaſy, commodious Huſband, and inherited from *Schah-Riar* only his Virtues, and his Paſſion for

'Tis worth remarking, that the Collection of Tales of *Scheherazade*, which his illustrious Grandfather caused to be wrote in Letters of Gold, was the only Book he vouchsafed to read his whole Reign.

How far Tales may embelish the Mind, or how agreeable, or sublime soever the Knowledge and Ideas may be that we draw from thence, it is dangerous to devote our whole Time to such kind of Reading. Those of the deepest Penetration, who are above narrow Prejudices, and see the Insufficiency of the Sciences, are the only Persons capable of judging what Use these sort of Compositions are of to Society, as well as what Esteem, or even Veneration, is due to those, who discover a Genius for them, and have Resolution enough to dare to undertake them, in spite of the Contempt, which Pride and Ignorance have fixed on this Species of Writing. The important Truths that are couch'd under Fables, the noble Sallies of Imagination we so frequently meet with in them, and the ludicrous Ideas they abound with, take not with the Vulgar, who generally commend those Things *most* they comprehend *least*; which, nevertheless, they fancy themselves wise enough to understand.

Schah-Baham is a memorable Instance of the Injustice of Mankind in this respect: Tho'

Tho' he could tell you the Origin of the Fairies, as exactly as if he had lived in those Times; tho' no one had a more distinct Knowledge of the celebrated Country of *Ginnistan*, or was more deeply vers'd in the famous Dynasties of the first Kings of *Persia*; and tho' he was incontestibly the most conversant of any in the History of Events, which had never happen'd; notwithstanding all this, he pass'd for the weakest Prince of his Time.

We must own indeed, he had not the gracefullest manner in the World in his Narratives; and what added to the Disagreeableness, he knew not when to leave off. With this Propensity therefore, it was impossible he should not become somewhat tedious; more especially as his Auditors always consisted of Women and Courtiers, who being generally Persons as delicate as superficial, are more attentive to the Elegance of a Turn, than they are struck with the Justness and Greatness of a Thought. 'Twas, doubtless, from what the Courtiers themselves said of *Schah-Baham*, that *Scheik-Ebu-Taher-Abou-Feraiky*, an Historian, and Co-temporary with that Prince, laid the Foundation for the Character he has given of him in his *Grand History of the Indies*; and which is such as you will see faithfully

ſet forth in the Sequel: 'Tis taken from that Part where he ſpeaks of Tales.

Schah-Baham, firſt of that Name, was an exceeding weak and effeminate Prince: It was not poſſible to be endow'd with leſs Underſtanding; and (what is pretty common, and in which Particular he has a great many like him) it was not poſſible to have a higher Conceit of it. He uſually made a Wonder at what was the moſt obvious, and had no Conception but for Things the moſt abſurd, and out of all Credibility. If he happen'd to think, even once in a Twelve-month, he could ſcarce hold his Tongue a Minute in a Day. He ſpoke of himſelf nevertheleſs with exceſſive Modeſty, and was graciouſly pleas'd to decline all Pretentions to Wit and Vivacity; but for Solidity of Reflection he took upon him to ſay, there was not his Equal.

Thoſe Pleaſures which depend on the Mind, affected not the Sultan; all kind of Exerciſe was diſpleaſing to him, and yet he never wanted Occupation. He had a Variety of Birds, that contributed much to his Amuſement: His Parrots, thanks to the Care he took in their Education, were the ſtupideſt Parrots in all *India*; without reckoning his Monkeys, to whom he devoted no ſmall Part of his Time; beſides his Women, who, after the Birds and the Beaſts of his

Menagerie,

Menagerie, appear'd to him the next proper Objects of his Diverſion.

Yet, in ſpite of theſe high Avocations; in ſpite of all his vary'd Pleaſures, the Sultan's Time hung heavy on his Hands. Even his darling Tales, thoſe conſtant Objects of his Wonder and Veneration, which it was Death to criticiſe upon, even they began to grow inſipid from an inceſſant Repetition. Not that he was not ſtill an Admirer of them; but only he could not help now and then yawning out his Admiration. In fine, his Irkſomeneſs follow'd him even into the Apartments of his Women; where he paſſed a Part of his Life in ſeeing them *embroider* and *pink*, being Arts he had in ſingular Eſtimation, the Invention of which he look'd upon as the Maſter-piece of Human Wit, and order'd all his Courtiers to give their whole Application to them.

As he was extremely liberal in his Rewards to the Proficients in thoſe Arts, there was an univerſal Emulation through the Empire to excel in them; inſomuch that *Embroidering* and *Pinking* ſoon became the only Means in the *Indies* to arrive at Preferment and Honours. The Sultan acknowledg'd no other kind of Merit; or at leaſt took it for granted, when once a Man was poſſeſs'd of theſe Talents, he had of courſe, all the Requiſites

to make a great General, or consummate Statesman. To give a Proof how much he was convinced of this Truth, he advanced to the Dignity of *first Vizir* a Courtier of this effeminate Stamp. He had liv'd long unnotic'd among the Herd of Courtiers, who, not knowing how to employ their Time, pass it with troubling Kings with their Presence, and reciprocally in making the Presence of Majesty as troublesome to themselves; but happy for him, he was look'd on as the ablest *Pinker* in the Kingdom, when it pleas'd *Schah-Baham* to take it into his Head to reverence *Pinking*; nor was he indebted, like many others, for the high Honour of being *Pinker* to his Royal Master, and holding the first Employment in the Empire, to Cabals and Intrigues; but he ow'd it purely to the Superiority of his Genius.

Of all the Wives of *Schah-Baham*, the Queen Sultaness was distinguish'd for her superior Sense, and made the Delight of those, who, in so trifling a Court, had yet the Spirit to think, and glory in a Pursuit of Knowledge. She was the sole Patroness of the Merit, she could discern so well; and the Sultan himself would seldom care to swerve from her Advice, tho' she was far from approving, either his Taste, or his Pleasures. If on some Occasions she rallied him on

on his Monkeys, and his other Amuſements, he contented himſelf with ſaying, ſhe was waſpiſh, which is the common-place Objection of Fools to Men of Wit.

One Day the Sultan being with his whole Court in the Apartment of the Women, profoundly attentive to their Work, was ſcarce able notwithſtanding to ſubdue the Aſſaults of an approaching Fit of Heavineſs; but at laſt, with wonderful Alacrity, I am not ſurpriz'd, cries he, yawning, that I was juſt dropping aſleep—Why, we are all as mute as Fiſhes—Come—talk—talk—How I love talk! It's ſo pithy!

What Subject, ſays the Sultaneſs, would your Majeſty pleaſe to have us talk of? Very pretty, truly, reply'd he; I would have you talk, and you would have me tell you what you ſhall talk of, as if I were born a Conjurer. Is it not enough that I command you to talk to me of ſomething, without being oblig'd myſelf to name the individual Thing I would have talk'd of? But do you know, now, that you have nothing near as much Wit as you may imagine you have; that People dream more than they talk, and that the few good Things are ſaid, which one in ten don't underſtand, is within an am's ace in my Mind of being ſilly, flat Stuff. For example; do you think, if the Sultaneſs

Scheherazade was living, and among us, ſhe would not readily tell us the beautifulleſt Tales in the World, without waiting to be aſk'd by my Aunt *Dinarzade?* —— But *à propos* —— talking of her has put a Scruple in my Head. Let her Memory have been ever ſo good, it is impoſſible ſhe could retain all the Stories ſhe was ſo amply furniſh'd with: What if noBody ſhould preciſely remember thoſe ſhe forgot? or ſhould none have been wrote ſince her Time? or be actually a-writing? —— Spare, Sir, your Doubts on that Head, cries the *Vizir*; I have the Honour to aſſure your Majeſty, that I am not only in Poſſeſſion of a plentiful Stock of Tales, but have likewiſe ſo whimſical a Talent at inventing them, that even thoſe of your late illuſtrious Grandmother do not ſurpaſs them.

Vizir! Vizir! ſaid the Sultan, that is ſaying a bold Word! My Grandmother was a Perſon of a Phœnix Merit.

Doubtleſs, cries the Sultaneſs, there goes a prodigious deal to the making of a Tale! Would not one really imagine, to hear you, that it was the laſt Effort of human Invention! yet what can be more *puerile*, more abſurd? What is a Work, (if a Tale deſerves that Name) what is a Work, I ſay, where Probability is continually violated, and the receiv'd

ceiv'd Mode of Thinking as conſtantly deſtroy'd? It is a Work, that is built on the trivial, and the *falſe Marvellous*; that preſents you with extraordinary Beings, and the Almightineſs of Fairies; that over-turns the Order of Nature and the Elements, only for the ſake of creating ridiculous Objects, the mere Children of a diſtemper'd Brain, and which very ſeldom repay us for the Extravagance of their Creation. Happy would it be, if theſe wretched Compoſitions only took from our Wiſdom; but I fear by their too lively Deſcriptions, ſo offenſive to Modeſty, they reach the Heart, and leave dangerous Impreſſions behind.

Much ado about nothing, ſays the Sultan, very gravely —— pompous Words, without any Meaning —— What you ſay, I muſt own, is ſtriking at firſt; but by the help of a little Reflection, I find upon the whole, that the Thing in queſtion is to know whether you are in the right? Now, as I was reſolv'd to clear up the Point, and have juſt finiſh'd the Solution of it, I muſt tell you, I don't believe a Syllable of the fine Things you have been ſaying. 'Tis not that I intend, by defending my Aſſertion, to play the Logician; but, ſince a Tale has ever afforded me the moſt refin'd Amuſement, it neceſſarily follows, that a Tale is not ſo fri-

volous a Thing as you would make it. And moſt certainly I am not ſo weak to be brought to believe it poſſible for a Sultan to be a Fool. Beſides— that is, by way of *Parentheſis* — It is full as evident, that a marvellous Thing— by which I underſtand one of theſe Things— which I could eaſily explain, if neceſſary— But, to deal ſincerely, what is this to us, after all? What I maintain is, that I am an Admirer of Tales, and that they are not ſo agreeable to me, unleſs there be what we People of Taſte call a little of the Roguiſh in them. That gives them an intereſting Turn . . . ſo affecting! —— As for the reſt, I conceive you perfectly; 'tis as if you were to ſay to me, I am the ingenious He, that can both tell, and make a Tale —— He is the Man for Me —— I am thinking how we ſhall ſhorten the tedious length of Days —— Let every one recount his Story— When I ſay Story, I underſtand myſelf, do you ſee! I mean thoſe conſiſting of ſurpriſing Events, of Fairies, of Enchantments — I hold no other for Truth, and you may believe me —— Well, then— Every one agrees, I find, to tell his Story. *Mahomed* aſſiſt me! But, why do I aſk Aſſiſtance! Need I once doubt of excelling the Univerſe in my Attempts that Way, ſince I am deſcended from

Pro-

Progenitors ſo renown'd for their fabulous Productions ?

Upon the whole, then, without Favour or Affection, I make the following Declaration; Firſt, That all and ſingular of our loving Subjects ſhall have the Liberty to relate his Story to us ; that every one ſhall begin in his Turn, not as our Will, but as the Lot ſhall decide ; and laſtly, that there ſhall be ſet apart for the above-mention'd Purpoſe, half an Hour every Day, more or leſs, according as it ſhall be agreeable to us.

On finiſhing theſe Words, he caus'd the whole Court to draw Lots. The *Vizir* was very deſirous of having the firſt Lot ; but, to his Mortification, it fell on a young Courtier, who, after having obtain'd the Sultan's Permiſſion, began thus.

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THE SOPHA: A MORAL TALE.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

The least tiresome in the BOOK.

YOU are not, may it please your Majesty, to be told, that tho' your Subject, I make not Profession of the same Religion, and acknowledge no other than the God *Brama*.

Suppose I am not, says the Sultan; what Embelishment is that to your Tale? your Religion

Religion is your own, and no Concern of mine; and 'tis ſo much the worſe for your ſelf, if you worſhip *Brama* inſtead of *Mahomed*, who is worth a hundred of the former. But, tho' I mention this as a Friend, don't run away with a Thing, and fancy I do it to top the Doctor upon you; for really, to be plain, I am very indifferent about the Matter —— Go — on.

The Followers of *Brama*, Sir, believe in the Tranſmigration of Souls, continued *Amanzei*, (for that is the Name of the Relator) that is to ſay, not to confound your Majeſty, we believe, that immediately on the Diſſolution of the Body, the Soul paſſes into another, and ſo ſucceſſively, as long as it ſhall pleaſe *Brama*, or till the Soul is become ſufficiently purify'd to be rank'd among thoſe Spirits, whom in their due Time he has judg'd worthy of eternal Happineſs.

Now, tho' this Opinion of the *Metempſichoſis* be generally eſtabliſh'd among us, we have not all the ſame Reaſons for believing in the Certainty of it; ſince there are but very few, to whom it is permitted to remember the different Tranſmigrations of their Soul. It ordinarily happens, that on the Diſſolution of the Body, where a Soul had been impriſon'd, it enters into another, without preſerving the leaſt Traces of its former Con-

Condition, either as to Knowledge acquir'd, or Things, in which it had born a Part.

Thus are our Faults continually loſt to us, and we begin a freſh Career with a Soul as new, and as ſuſceptible of Vice and Error, as when *Brama* firſt took it from that immenſe whirling Maſs of Fire, of which it makes a Part till its final Deſtination.

There are many among us, who murmur at this Diſpoſition of *Brama*; but I queſtion much whether with any Reaſon. Our Souls, deſtin'd, for a long Succeſſion of Ages, to paſs from Body to Body, would, for the moſt part, be unhappy, if they were to remember what they had been. A Soul, for inſtance, after having animated the Body of a King, if it ſhould find itſelf in that of a Reptile, or, which is ſtill more to be lamented, in the Body of one of thoſe wretched Mortals, afflicted with Want and Miſery of every kind, its new Condition would be inſupportable.

On the other hand, I grant, if a Man, who ſees himſelf rolling in Wealth, or elevated to ſupreme Dignity, ſhould remember his having been but an *Inſect*, he would poſſibly make a leſs bad Uſe of the Affluence, or State, in which the Goodneſs of *Brama* had placed him. If we conſider, however, the Haughtineſs, the Cruelty, the Inſolence

of

of thoſe, who, from the *loweſt* Stations in Life, are rais'd by Fortune to the *higheſt*, we may reaſonably believe, from their great Promptitude to forget their former Eſtate, that their Humiliation will yet have a more rapid Tranſition, without having the leaſt Merit in their future Tranſmigration.

Beſides— the Soul would find itſelf overburthen'd with the vaſt Number of Ideas muſt neceſſarily have accru'd from precedent Exiſtencies; and, perhaps, by being more attentive to what it *had been*, than to what it *ſhould be*, would neglect the Functions of the Body it *actually occupies*, and thereby, in ſhort, confound the Order of Nature, rather than rectify it.

Prithee now, what is't you're about, interrupted the Sultan? *Mahomed*, pardon me! the Man is certainly preaching up *Morality* to me! — May it pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, I hop'd ſome preliminary Reflections might not be improper —— Very improper, I tell you, reply'd *Schah-Baham*; and ſurely I ſhould know beſt; for, whatever you may think, I declare, I have no Reliſh for *Morality*; it's dry; and you'll very much oblige me to leave it quite out.

Your Majeſty is obey'd— anſwer'd *Amanzei* —— *Brama*, may it pleaſe you, Sir, as has been already obſerv'd, ſometimes permits

mits us to remember what we *have been*, especially after some very remarkable Punishment; and, as a Proof of it, I perfectly remember myself to have been a *Sopha*.

A *Sopha*, cry'd the Sultan — poo! poo— Impossible! Do you take me for an *Ostrich*, to digest such gross Absurdities? I could find in my Heart to have you scorch'd a little, young Gentleman, to teach you how you vent such idle Stuff before us, and in so positive a Manner.

Your most gracious Majesty is pleas'd to be facetious to-day, says the Sultaness —— It is the most glorious Part of your Character to *doubt of nothing*, and yet you will not *believe* it possible for a *Man* to *have been* a *Sopha!* That is not being quite consistent with yourself.

I see, you think to foil me by Objections; and yet, methinks, I am not in the wrong— not but I may, however, be mistaken—— No— now I think on't, I am in the right. I cannot, in very Conscience, believe *Amazei*; and shall I be a Cypher of a Mussulman?

O wonderful! answer'd the Sultaness— well, since I perceive there is Conscience in the Case, I will beg Leave to propose an Expedient: You may give *Amanzei* the *hearing*, without *believing* him ——Why ay, resum'd

ſum'd the Sultan —— It ſhall not be becauſe the Thing is *incredible*, that *I will not believe it*, but becauſe, tho' it were ever ſo true, that *I ought not to believe it*. I am very ſenſible there's a wide Difference —— And ſo, you ſay, *Amanzei*, that you have been a *Sopha?* A terrible Adventure, on my Honour! Prithee tell me— was you a plain, or an embroider'd *Sopha?*

The latter, pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei* — And this Receptacle of my Soul, was Roſe-colour, embroider'd with Silver— Very good, ſays the Sultan — You muſt have made a tolerable Piece of Furniture — But, pray, why did your *Brama* convert you into a *Sopha*, of all things? What was the Humour of that? —A *Sopha!* — Well, it paſſes all Credulity.

It was to puniſh my Soul for its inordinate Deſires, reply'd *Amanzei* — Had the immortal *Brama* plac'd it in any other Body, it would not ſo effectually have anſwer'd his Purpoſe; and therefore he rightly judg'd, that he ſhould mortify me more by making me a *Sopha*, than if he had ſent me into a *Reptile*.

I remember, on my Soul's quitting the Body of a Woman, it took Poſſeſſion of an egregious affected Fop, who was a buſy, fluttering, vain, empty Thing, full of Scandal, and

and inconſtant; a great Connoiſſeur in Trifles; wholly taken-up in Dreſs, and a thouſand other important Nothings; ſo that, I could ſcarce perceive I had chang'd Habitation.

I ſhould be very glad to know, interrupted the Sultan, a little of your Hiſtory, while you was a Woman: The Relation muſt be extremely curious; for I have ever thought, that Women are myſterious Beings. I don't know whether you conceive me; but I mean, it is difficult to gueſs at their Thoughts.

Perhaps, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, we ſhould not be ſo much at a Loſs on that Head, if we believ'd them leſs artful. If I remember right, I uſed to be very ſatirical on thoſe, who prais'd me for Solidity of Reflection, while I ow'd my Ideas entirely to the preſent Moment; or, who expected Reaſon from one, who was govern'd ſolely by the Law of Caprice; or, who again, by endeavouring too much to ſcrutinize, were the leaſt able to ſee into me. I was *faithful* at the Time I was thought *falſe*: I paſs'd for a *Coquette*, when in reality I was a *Prude*; and I felt the *warmeſt Inclinations*, when it was imagin'd I had the *coldeſt Indifference*. The Character they gave me, for the moſt part, was not my own, or ſuch as I had renounced long before. Thoſe whoſe Intereſt it was to know me

me beſt, and with whom I diſſembled the leaſt; or to whom even, thro' a natural Indiſcretion and Giddineſs in me, I diſclos'd the whole Secrets of my Soul, were not the People that plac'd the greateſt Confidence in me, or who put the kindeſt Conſtructions on my Actions. Thus, by judging of me only according to the Ideas they themſelves had form'd of me, they were perpetually miſtaken, and thought they knew me thoroughly, becauſe their Character of me was agreeable to their own Imagination.

Where is the Novelty of all this? cries the Sultan: Are we to be told at this time of Day, that it is paſt human Underſtanding, to know Women thoroughly? I have a long time given over all Hopes of the Diſcovery— So, prithee, *Amanzei*, let us have done with this Diſcuſſion— it quite wearies out the Mind, and occaſions a long Preamble, foreign to my Queſtion — I thought I wanted to know what *you did* while you was a Woman.

I have, pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, but a very faint Idea of what I then did: What chiefly occurs to me is, that in my Bloom, I was immoderately vain, and ſoon diſtinguiſh'd myſelf a finiſh'd *Coquette*. I was incapable of *Love* or *Hate*: I never thought; had no Principle of Action; but was, by turns, what People would have me, or as my

In-

Interests and Pleasures forc'd me to be. After a Series of unbounded Irregularities, I commenc'd *Prude*, when it was become necessary to be more decent in the Pursuit of them; and, in fine, finish'd my Course in indulging myself with the Thoughts of past favourite Pleasures.

It was from the great Passion I had had for *Sopha's*, I suppose, that made the all-just *Brama* think of confining my Soul to this Piece of Furniture. He was pleas'd to suffer it to retain all its Faculties in this Prison, in order, no doubt, rather to give me a more exquisite Sense, than to mitigate the Horror of my Lot; nor was it to be releas'd from thence, till two Lovers should yield me the first Fruits of a mutual Affection.

What! mincing the Matter again! cry'd the Sultan; as if you could not out with it at once, and tell us in direct Terms, that— You will not, sure, interrupted the Sultaness, be so gracious as to give us an Explanation? Why not, resum'd he? I like People should speak to be understood—However, Madam, if it is not agreeable to you, let *Amanzei* be as obscure as he pleases— thank our Prophet! I don't want Conception.

The Memory I retain'd of what I had done and seen, was sufficient, continu'd *Amanzei*, to convince me, that the Condition of

of my Enlargement was ſuch as would make my Doom not of ſhort Continuance; but, however, the Permiſſion allow'd me by *Brama*, to tranſport myſelf, at pleaſure, from *Sopha* to *Sopha*, was no ſmall Alleviation: It afforded a Variety, that ſoften'd my Impriſonment; and beſides, as my Soul retain'd the ſame Pleaſure in Ridicule, as when it animated a Woman; and as I had withal the Privilege of having Admiſſion into the moſt private Receſſes, and making a third Perſon in Things that were imagin'd the moſt conceal'd, I confeſs theſe Advantages made ſome Amends for my Puniſhment.

After *Brama* had pronounc'd my Sentence, he was pleas'd to tranſport my Soul into a *Sopha*, that was carrying Home to a Woman of Quality, who had the Character of being a Lady of conſummate Virtue. But if it be true, that few paſs for *Heroes* with thoſe, who ſee them *near at hand*, I can ſay too, that there are few *chaſte Women* on the *Sopha*.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Will not please Every-body.

A *SOPHA* not being the proper Furniture of an Antichamber, I was plac'd in a Cabinet, a little separated from the Palace of the Lady I was going to belong to. Here she used often to retire, as she said, to her private Meditations, and that she might offer up her Vows to *Brama* with the less Interruption. As soon as I enter'd the Cabinet, I could not help suspecting, from the manner in which I saw it adorn'd, that it did not seem a proper Place for such solemn Purposes :- Not that there was any thing sumptuous, or over-affected in the Furniture ; for, at the first Glance, all appear'd rather solid, than gay ; but, on a closer Examination, I could perceive there reign'd a kind of *Hypocritical Luxury*, which presented you with Things that struck the Eye, and were of a Convenience not to be describ'd ; in short, with Things, which did not seem contriv'd for the Use of Austerity. At the same time I thought I was of a little

tle too gay a Colour myſelf for a Woman, who pretended to be ſo far remov'd from a Coquet.

I had not been many Minutes in the Cabinet, before my Miſtreſs came in. She look'd upon me with Indifference; ſeem'd ſatisfy'd, however; but was ſomewhat ſparing of her Praiſes of me, and then, with great Abſence of Mind, ſhe diſmiſs'd the Workman. No ſooner did ſhe ſee herſelf alone, but that ſevere and gloomy Aſpect began to diſappear, and I preſently beheld another Countenance, and other Eyes. She examin'd and try'd me ſeveral times with an Exactitude, that preſag'd I was not bought for Parade only. This little frolickſome Experiment, and the gay Tenderneſs ſhe aſſum'd on finding herſelf without a Witneſs, did not, however, leſſen in me the high Opinion they had of her in *Agra*.

I was very ſenſible that there are few Souls, how perfect ſoever they may be eſteem'd, but have their favourite Vice; perhaps often attempted to be ſubdu'd, but, for the moſt part, triumphant; that they ſeem to ſacrifice their Pleaſures, only to return to them with more Senſuality; and that they often make Virtue conſiſt, leſs in *Self-denial*, than in *Repentance*. From hence I concluded, that *Fatme* might be of an indolent Diſpo-

ſition,

ſition, and I could not at that Time have juſtify'd myſelf in carrying my Conjectures further.

After having ſatisfy'd her Curioſity, as to me, ſhe open'd a private Cupboard, artfully contriv'd in the Wainſcot, and taking a Book, ſhe paſs'd to a ſtately Book-Caſe, fill'd with pompous Volumes, rang'd with extraordinary Art. Hence ſhe likewiſe took a Book, and toſs'd it diſdainfully upon me; then returning with the firſt ſhe had choſen, ſhe flung herſelf on the downy Cuſhions, which overſpread me.

But, prithee tell us, *Amanzei*, interrupted the Sultan — was this very virtuous Lady pretty? agreeable? ſo ſo? or what?

More beautiful, Sir, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, than ſhe appear'd to be. Had ſhe even been leſs virtuous, with ſo abſtracted an Air, which begets our Contempt indeed, but which alſo excites our Wiſhes, ſhe might have diſputed it with the faireſt. Her Features were lovely, without Lure, without Gayety, without other Aid than a certain ſcornful Auſterity in her Looks, without which, Women of this Caſt would fancy themſelves loſt to Virtue. Every thing about her beſpoke an utter Neglect and Contempt of herſelf. She was well made, but

very awkward; and if there was a Stiffness in her Walk, it was because a slow, easy Pace befits Persons employ'd in Subjects of the most serious Nature. Her Aversion for Glare and Dress, did not extend, indeed, to that Negligence, which in other Devotees becomes tasteful. Her Habit was plain, and of a Colour somewhat dark; yet she discover'd in that Simplicity a Taste not inferior to her Rank. She was more particularly careful to lose nothing of the Elegance of her Shape; and, under all this Shew of Austerity, she discover'd the Height of Female Vanity in Masquerade.

She did not seem to be much pleas'd with the last Book she had taken, tho' a large Treatise of Morality, compos'd by a celebrated *Bramin*. Whether she imagin'd she had sufficient Light within herself, or that she should not meet with any thing pleasing in that dry System; however that be, she did not vouchsafe to go further than the Title-page before she threw it aside, for that taken out of the private Cupboard in the Wainscot, which was a delightful Romance, full of interesting Circumstances, as well as the most lively Images of Nature. This Choice, so unbecoming *Fatme*, gave me a Surprize I could not easily recover myself from.

from. Doubtleſs, ſays I to myſelf, ſhe does this to make Trial of the Steadineſs of her Soul, and ſee how far it is capable of withſtanding thoſe Ideas, which uſually work ſo powerfully in others.

As I did not, at that Time, enter minutely into the Motives of a Conduct ſo contrary to the Character I had conceiv'd of her, I could do no leſs than ſuppoſe ſhe acted upon a good Principle. I could not help remarking, however, that ſhe was affected at what ſhe read; her Eyes began to ſparkle, and ſhe took them off the Page, rather to indulge the pleaſing Idea, than divert it. Recovering herſelf from the Reflections ſhe ſeem'd bury'd in, ſhe was about to reſume the Romance; but, on hearing a ſudden Noiſe, ſhe ſlipp'd it under me, and ſnatch'd up the colder Volume of the *Bramin* in its ſtead, as imagining it, no doubt, much fitter to be *ſeen*, than *read*.

She had no ſooner open'd it, than a very graceful Perſon enter'd the Cabinet, and approach'd her with ſuch diſtant Reſpect, that, but for the Magnificence of his Habit, I ſhould have taken him for one of the Slaves of *Fatme*. On her Part, ſhe receiv'd him ſo coldly! ſeem'd ſo ſhock'd at his Preſence! ſpoke with ſo much Ill-nature! gave

ſuch broad Hints of her Diſtaſte for his Converſation! that I preſently gueſs'd he could only be her Huſband; neither was I miſtaken in my Conjecture. Ill receiv'd, as he was, he made uſe of every ſoft Perſuaſive, that ſhe would permit him to ſit by her, and met with as froward a Refuſal for a conſiderable time; nor did ſhe condeſcend at laſt, but to entertain him with impertinent Reproaches for Faults, ſhe pretended he was every Day guilty of. Notwithſtanding this, the poor Huſband bore her petulant Reproofs with a Sweetneſs of Temper, that rais'd my Indignation in his Behalf. The Opinion he had of *Fatme*'s Virtue, contributed not a little to his Docility, perhaps, to the full as much as her Beauty; and the little Care ſhe took to appear amiable in the Eyes of her Huſband, only ſerv'd to awaken his Tenderneſs. The moſt timid Lover, on the firſt Declaration of his Paſſion to a haughty Miſtreſs, could not be more put to it, than was this ſervile Huſband to tell his Wife how much he ador'd her! He preſs'd her in the tenderest, and moſt paſſionate Terms to return his Ardour; when, after a great deal of awkward Reſiſtance, ſhe yielded at laſt in as awkward a Compliance.

But, in ſpite of the great Scruples ſhe had rais'd, to make him believe, ſhe granted not what

what he exacted from her, but with the ſtrongeſt Reluctance, I could perceive ſhe was leſs inſenſible than ſhe wiſh'd to appear. Now again ſhe grew more ſerious--- There was a melting Roll in her Eye —— Sigh after Sigh ſucceeded--- and thro' very Negligence ſhe became by far leſs active —— Yet, after all, ſhe valu'd not her Huſband. I cannot ſay what were the preciſe Thoughts of *Fatme* on this Occaſion; but whether it was Gratitude that made her leſs rigid, or ſhe had further Deſigns on the Aſſiduities of her Huſband, it is certain, there was a great Change in her Behaviour towards him: She was far from being ſo ſhocking, as at his accoſting her; but was tolerably tender in her Expreſſions, which were yet deliver'd in a grave, ſententious Tone. The Huſband, however, was far from being able to ſee the Motive to it, nor was at all affected by it; which did not a little ſerve to mortify *Fatme*, By degrees ſhe wrought herſelf up to a Quarrel; and in an Inſtant ſaw all that was odious in him. What a Life! How deteſtable in his Manners! What Extravagance! What Debaucheries! In fine, ſhe loaded him with ſo many Reproaches, that in ſpite of his Patience, he was oblig'd to quit the Room. *Fatme* was enrag'd at his Departure. The Anger that flaſh'd from

her Eyes, more viſible to me than it had been to her Huſband, made me eaſily perceive it was not his Abſence that could reſtore her Tranquility. And, indeed, by certain Expreſſions, pronounc'd with a ſingular Emphaſis, when ſhe found herſelf alone, all Doubt was remov'd, as to what ſhe thought.

How would *Fatme!* the Example and Terror of the Women of *Agra*; whom all hated, yet all were proud to imitate; and before whom even the gayeſt put on the Maſk of Hypocriſy: How would ſhe have improv'd them, had they, like me, ſeen her in her Solitude, and in all the Freedom of the Cabinet!

O lack! ſays the Sultan, was ſhe a Woman, who at the Bottom — Why, there's nothing ſo common——— I would not have you think it ſo extraordinary a Matter to——— You know what——— Hey!

Your Majeſty is ſo clear in your Explanation, reſum'd *Amanzei*, there needs no further Comment; and, without being too profound, I dare venture to ſay I underſtand your Majeſty to a Tittle.

Indeed! ſays the Sultan, laughing——— well — come — unravel—unravel——What is it you gather?

That *Fatme* was the very Reverſe of what ſhe pretended to be, anſwer'd *Amanzei*———

My

My inmoſt Thoughts, may I periſh! interrupted the Sultan—Go on—You've Wit—You've Wit.

Fatme, in Appearance, ſhunn'd Pleaſures, continu'd *Amanzei*, but it was only to revel in greater Security. She was not of the Number of thoſe imprudent Women, who having ſpent a Youth in every Pleaſure, Gaiety and unwarrantable Exceſs, abandon the Toilet and the World, and after having been long the Scandal of their Time, ſet themſelves up for the Ornaments of it; yet thus, by affecting Virtues they have not, they become even more contemptible than when they put Scandal to Defiance. Far from this was *Fatme*— Happy in being born with a natural Propenſity to Hypocriſy, with a Deſire of Public Eſteem, (a Thing that ſeldom troubles the greener Part of Life.) She was very early ſenſible of the powerful Attractive of Pleaſure, and the Impoſſibility of denying herſelf the Gratification, without the moſt cruel Senſations; yet ſhe found at the ſame time, that a Woman could not indulge herſelf publickly, without expoſing herſelf to Shame, and all the Pangs and Dangers that greatly ſerve to embitter the Enjoyment. A little Impoſture therefore became abſolutely neceſſary; for ſhe had made it her Buſineſs leſs to ſubdue her Paſſions,

ſions, than to veil them under the Appearance of rigid Virtue. She was naturally of an amorous Complexion, yet was rather vicious than tender in her Inclinations; leſs delicate than ſenſual; and ſhe gave herſelf up to Pleaſure, but knew not what it was to love. She had not yet ſeen twenty-five Years: She had been marry'd; and it was more than eight ſince ſhe had anticipated the Nuptial Joys. What uſually captivates with her Sex, had no Weight with *Fatme*: An amiable Perſon; an Infinity of Wit, might poſſibly inſpire her with Wiſhes, but ſhe yielded not to them. The Objects of her Paſſion ſhe ſought for elſewhere; either among thoſe, whoſe Profeſſion exempts them from Suſpicions, and is a Seal for their Silence; or among thoſe, who, by the Meanneſs of their Stations, are too low to be ſuſpected; whom Liberality commands; whom Fear locks up their Mouths; and who, in ſpite of the Baſeneſs of their Employment, are yet capable of the moſt hidden Myſteries of Love. *Fatme*, in fine, ill-natur'd, paſſionate, haughty, baſe, cruel, ſelfiſh, perfidious, without Friendſhip, and without one good Quality, as ſhe was, abandon'd herſelf to her Inclinations, without any Danger to her Character: neither was there a Fault ſhe did not even make ſubſervient to this ſame

dear

dear Reputation. Her ſeeming Zeal for *Brama*; the Sorrow ſhe teſtify'd for the Irregularities of others, and her charitable Offices towards their Converſion, not only cover'd, but ſanctify'd more Vices, than ever united in one Woman. When ſhe injur'd any one, 'twas always with ſuch a good Intent! Her Soul was ſo pure! and ſhe was ſo piouſly revengeful, what poſſibility was there to ſuſpect, that ſo upright a Perſon, in the Effects of her Hatred and Malice, was guided alone by perſonal Conſiderations?

CHAP. III.

Contains a great many Improbabilities.

AFTER the Departure of her Huſband, *Fatme* was going to reſume the Romance, when an old *Bramin*, follow'd by two Women, whoſe Comforter he pretended to be, but whoſe Tyrant he was in reality, came in to pay her a Viſit. She got up, and receiv'd them with ſo demure and compos'd an Air, ſhe would have deceiv'd the moſt Diſcerning. It was with

Difficulty that the *Bramin* hinder'd her from proſtrating herſelf before him; which he did, however, with much innate Satisfaction, expreſſive of his own fancy'd Importance: In ſhort, he ſeem'd ſo elevated with this Teſtimony of her Humility, and even ſo perſuaded, that he was deſerving ſtill of more, it was impoſſible not to ſmile within myſelf at the holy Vanity of this ridiculous Perſonage.

Where Perſons of ſuch perfect Characters form'd the Converſation, it was ſcarce poſſible it ſhould not turn on the Frailties of others. Not that Scandal is an uncommon Topic among the gay World; but talking more for the ſake of the *Ridicule* than the *Fault*, their Scandal is rather an Amuſement; and they are not perfect enough, like others, to make a Duty of it. They injure you, indeed, ſometimes; but 'tis generally without deſigning it; and their gay purſuit of Pleaſure prevents them from dwelling long on it, or thinking of converting it to their Advantage. The ſour and moroſe way of ſpeaking ill of others, pretended to be ſo neceſſary to their Amendment, and which, but for this Plea, would be deteſtable, is with the light and airy unknown: They ———

No

No more of that, interrupted the Sultan, in an angry Tone— are you coming again, with your musty Reflections? — Please your Majesty, answer'd *Amanzei*, they are absolutely necessary on some Occasions —— I tell you, reply'd the Sultan, it's false; and tho' it were true; what of that? Have you the Insolence . . . . . in one word, 'tis to me the Story is directed, and it shall be told as I like best—— I'll be diverted, without any more of your long-winded Morals, that give me the Megrim—— I warrant you are vain of being thought a fine Orator! But, as I am a King! I'll soon spoil you for harranguing —— And here, by the Honour of a Sultan, I swear, that I will sheath my Scymetar in the Heart of the first, who shall dare to make a Reflection in my Presence —— Now you know our Pleasure, see that you acquit yourself accordingly.

As Reflections have the Misfortune to be displeasing to your Majesty, answer'd *Amanzei*, I will be careful to keep them to myself— That's very well said; now, cry'd the Sultan — proceed.

We never take a Pleasure in speaking Ill of others, that we do not take as great a one in praising our selves. *Fatme*, and the Company with her, had too good an Opinion of their own Merit, not to despise all, who

were not like themſelves. While the Card-Table was preparing, they enter'd into a Converſation, which did not belye their Character. The *Bramin*, indeed, began with ſaying ſome civil Things of a Lady of *Fatme*'s Aquaintance, which I could ſee was grating to her. Of all the Errors ſhe exclaim'd againſt, Love ſeem'd to her the moſt deſerving of Cenſure. If once a Woman had made a falſe Step, poſſeſs'd ſhe otherwiſe every valuable Quality, nothing could ſave her from the Preſecution of *Fatme*; but let her have been guilty of Crimes ever ſo odious and diſgraceful to her Sex, had ſhe never had her Lover, ſhe ſpoke of her as a moſt worthy Perſon, whoſe Virtue could not be enough admir'd.

The Lady the *Bramin* had ſpoke well of, happen'd, unluckily, to come within the Circumſtance, that moſt excited the Indignation of *Fatme*: Ah! the loſt Creature! ſays ſhe, with an ill-natur'd Accent —— how can you praiſe her! The *Bramin* excus'd himſelf, ſaying, he was ignorant of her Faults; and *Fatme* very charitably inform'd him of the Reaſons of her Contempt.

O generous Patroneſs of Virtue! ſaid one of the Women, directing hetſelf to *Fatme*, how will you be charm'd with what I am going to inform you of! *Nahami!* ſhe, whoſe

whoſe Conduct we have ſo often lamented together; even ſhe, frail as ſhe was, has this very inſtant renounced her Levity, and laid aſide Carmine! —Happy, indeed, cry'd *Fatme*, if her Change is ſincere! But, being good ourſelves, how eaſy, Madam, are we deceiv'd! At leaſt, I have found it ſo —— When one is born with ſuch a Rectitude of Heart as you are, Madam, we imagine the reſt of the World like ourſelves. But, after all, 'tis a beautiful Fault to judge the beſt of our Neighbours— And yet, with regard to *Nahami*, I cannot help having my Fears, that a Perſon, ſo profligate as ſhe has been, will ſcarce be able entirely to abandon her long-contracted ill Habits. Carmine may be left off much eaſier than our Faults; and very often we put on a Reſerve and a Shew of Sanctity, not ſo much to begin a new Life, as to impoſe on the World, and gratify our Appetites only with more privacy.

Upon my Word, ſays *Sahah Baham*, yawning and ſtretching, this Converſation will certainly give me a Nap — If you have a mind to ſee me in a Trance, by all means go on with it— I never heard ſuch a pack of Dreamers in my Life— one would think you ſhould be ſick of them yourſelf —— Prithee, diſpatch them —— I ſubmit to your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei* —— After having

ving exhausted the Conversation concerning *Nahami*, their Scandal became general, and in less than a Moment, I was acquainted with all the Adventures in *Agra*. After this, they enter'd into high Encomiums of each other, and then sat down gravely to Cards. After a good deal of Peevishness and Avarice during their Play, they formally took Leave of one another.

Well— I was on Thorns, says the Sultan, for fear—— You have oblig'd me sensibly— I hope I shall hear no more of those People —— May I depend on it ? —— Yes, please your Majesty, answer'd *Amanzei* —— Very well, resum'd the Sultan ; and, to shew the World I know how to reward the Services of my Subjects, I create you this instant an *Emir* --- I am told you embroider well, and are indefatigable ---- You will find your account in it — in fine . . . . . I delight in these Things —We must encourage Merit.

The new *Emir*, after having thank'd the Sultan for the Honour done him, proceeded thus : In spite of *Fatme*'s exterior Civility, I could perceive, that their Visit was as disagreeable to her, as it has been to your Majesty, and that, had she been left to her Choice, she would have employ'd her Time in something more amusing than any thing

they

they had it in their Power to entertain her with.

The Moment the Company was gone, *Fatme* fell into a profound Reflection, that was far from being melancholy. Her Eyes were all Tenderneſs —— She threw them with the moſt languiſhing Caſt round the Room, and ſeem'd with Tranſports to wiſh for ſomething ſhe had not, or what ſhe was fearful of poſſeſſing —— At laſt ſhe call'd.

At her Voice, a luſty young Slave enter'd the Cabinet. The Eyes of *Fatme* were eagerly fix'd upon him, where Love and Deſire reign'd abſolute, and yet ſhe ſeem'd irreſolute and timid —— At laſt, ſaid ſhe, all trembling, Shut the Door —— come hither, *Dabis* —— do not be afraid ---- we are now alone —— I give you leave to remember how much I love you, and prove your Tenderneſs to me.

Dabis, on this, quitted the *Slave* for the more pleaſing Character of the *Lover*. He had little of the delicate or the tender, but was all brutal Vigour, voracious in his Deſires, ignorant of the Art of protracting them, a Stranger to Gallantry, incapable of certain Senſations, unpractis'd in the ſoft Preludes of Enjoyment, but for the reſt, eſſentially qualify'd for all the groſſer Purpoſes of Love. This was not being truly the

the Lover; but to *Fatme*, who look'd for more than Addreſs, it was being ſomething more neceſſary. *Dabis* was extremely coarſe in his Praiſes; but while he continu'd to give ſuch ſtrong Proofs of the Power of her Beauty, theſe, to *Fatme*, were the fineſt Compliments in the World.

Fatme made herſelf ample Amends for the Reſerve ſhe had put on to her Huſband. Being now free from cruel Reſtraint, her Eyes ſparkled with the utmoſt Fire; ſhe carreſs'd *Dabis* with all the Eagerneſs of an exceſſive Paſſion; laviſh'd on him every endearing Expreſſion in the Power of Fondneſs; and, far from endeavouring to conceal herſelf, ſhe ſeem'd to take a Pride in opening her whole Soul to him. In the Interval of her Rapture, ſhe made him ſurvey the Beauties ſhe expos'd to him, and even inſiſted on freſh Proofs of his Affection, which of his ſimple ſelf he would rather have been excus'd from.

Dabis, however, was not very eaſily wrought on; his ſtupid Eyes beheld, unmov'd, the Rarities of *Fatme*. The Impreſſion they made on him was mechanical, his groſs Soul had no ſhare in it; and an Inſenſibility even reach'd to Enjoyment; but, nevertheleſs, *Fatme* had her Satisfactions. The Silence and Stupidity of *Dabis*, did not

clash

clash with her Self-love; and as she found him sensible to her Charms, it was matter of Indifference to her what Sensations he might have, or whether she heard not from him the elegant and more wordy Transports of a *Petit Maitre*.

Fatme, in abandoning herself to the Desires of *Dabis*, discover'd she had as little Delicacy as Virtue, and exacted not from him those Flights of Rapture, those polite and tender Nothings, which, to a refin'd Soul, are superior to Pleasure; or in which, to speak more properly, Pleasure itself consists.

Dabis, at last, sneak'd away, after having yawn'd more than once. He was one of those happy Fellows who, never thinking, have never any thing to say, and who are much better to be *employ'd* than *heard*.

Whatever Opinion the Amusements of *Fatme* had given me of her, I must own, now *Dabis* had left her, I concluded there remain'd no more Objects for her Meditation, and that therefore I should soon see no more of her; but I found myself mistaken: She was a Person not so easily diverted from Meditations of this kind; nor had she been long left to the Reflections of her Adventure, which *Dabis* afforded, before

fore there appear'd freſh Matter for Speculation.

A demure young *Bramin*, of a florid Complection, and one whoſe Gravity, nevertheleſs, did not efface the Sprightlineſs of his Temper, enter'd next the Cabinet. In ſpite of his Habit, which was not the moſt becoming, it was eaſy to ſee, that he was form'd to raiſe Deſires in more than one Prude. There was not, indeed, a *Bramin* in *Agra* more admir'd and follow'd. He talk'd, ſaid they, ſo well! with ſo much Sweetneſs! had ſuch a winning Eloquence, he ſtole into the very Soul, and left a Love of Virtue there ſo ſtrong, you could not afterwards go aſtray. Such was his public Character; and we ſhall ſoon ſee whether he deſerves the conſummate Praiſes given of him in his private.

This happy *Bramin* approach'd *Fatme* with a whining Preciſeneſs and flat kind of Gallantry; tho' you might perceive he aim'd at ſomething more polite; but by the awkardneſs of the Imitation, the *Bramin* ſtill peep'd thro' the Maſk.

Empreſs of Hearts, ſaid he to *Fatme*, with an affected Air, you are more beautiful to Day than thoſe happy Beings deſtin'd to the Service of *Brama*. You elevate my Soul to an Extacy, which has ſomething in it celeſtial,

tial, and which I could wiſh you to partake. *Fatme*, with a languiſhing Air, anſwer'd him much in the ſame Strain; and the *Bramin* continuing his, the Converſation became extremely tender; in which they were ſo ſingular in their Phraſes, they did not ſeem deſign'd for the Language of Love; and if it had not been for their Actions, I ſhould have ſtill wanted a Key to their Diſcourſe. *Fatme*, who was little affected with the Rhetorick of Love, and who, in reality, would rather have diſpens'd even with the Eloquence of the *Bramin*, whatever ſhe might ſay to the contrary, was the firſt to teſtify her diſlike to empty Words. The *Bramin*, who was as little pleas'd with them as ſhe, preſently ceas'd ſpeaking, and this whining, and inſipid Converſation ended as that of *Dabis* had begun.

'Tis remarkable, however, that *Fatme*, in doing the ſame Things, was yet more careful of her Behaviour, and endeavour'd to appear delicate, and actuated only by Love in the Eyes of the *Bramin*.

The *Bramin*, who pretty much reſembled *Dabis* in Perſon, was not inferior to him in any thing, and merited all the Careſſes the enamour'd *Fatme* laviſh'd unceaſing on him. After having given a Looſe to their utmoſt Wiſhes, they turn'd Virtue into Ridicule;

cule; diverted themſelves with deceiving the World, and gave each other mutual Leſſons of Hypocriſy. Theſe two odious Perſons at laſt ſeparated; he to the Duties of his Function, and *Fatme* to plague her Huſband with her uſual ill Humour.

During my abode in her Houſe, the Amuſements of her leiſure Hours were only ſuch as I have recounted to your ever-ſacred Majeſty.

Fatme, all-cautious, as ſhe was, forgot herſelf ſometimes. As ſhe was one Day ſollacing with the *Bramin*, her Huſband paſſing by the Door of the Cabinet, by accident, over-heard certain Expreſſions and Sighs, which greatly aſtoniſh'd him. The public Conduct of *Fatme* was ſuch as left no room for Suſpicion of her private Amuſements, and doubtleſs her Huſband could ſcarce gueſs from whence proceeded the Sighs and ſtrange Words he juſt had heard.

But, whether it was that he fancy'd he diſtinguiſh'd the Voice of *Fatme*, or that Curioſity alone prompted him to it, certain it is, he was reſolv'd to be ſatisfy'd of the Truth. Unluckily for *Fatme*, due care had not been taken of the Door, and at one puſh he burſt it open.

The Spectacle was ſuch, as for ſome Moments ſuſpended his Fury. He could ſcarce

believe

elieve his Eyes, and knew not on what to etermine — Perfidious Monſter! cry'd he, t laſt, receive the Puniſhment due to your rimes, and to your Hypocriſy.

At theſe Words, without liſtning to *Fatme*, or the *Bramin*, who by this had thrown hemſelves at his Feet, they fell the Victims f his juſt Reſentment; ſhocking as the cene appear'd, I cannot ſay it mov'd me. They were too deſerving of Death to be ity'd; and I was ſtill the leſs ſorry for ſo readful a Cataſtrophe, as it would ſhew the nhabitants of *Agra* the Baſeneſs of two erſons, who ſo long had been the Objects f their Admiration as Patterns of Virtue.

CHAP. IV.

Preſents you Things you poſſibly little think of.

AFTER the Death of *Fatme*, my Soul took its Flight to a neighbouring Palace, where every thing ſeem'd o have the ſame Aſpect as that I had juſt quitted, but where in reality there was a quite different way of thinking and acting.

The

The Lady it belong'd to, was not arriv'd at that Age, in which Women even of the beſt Senſe, uſually ridicule Gallantry, however they may not condemn it as a Vice: She was young and beautiful, and it could not be ſaid of her, that ſhe practis'd Virtue only becauſe ſhe was not form'd for Love. She had ſo unaffected a Simplicity, was ſo private in her Charities, and you ſaw in her ſo perfect a Tranquility, as forc'd one to believe ſhe really was what ſhe ſeem'd to be. She was prudent, without Conſtraint; good, without Vanity; and made it neither a Pain, nor a Merit to do her Duty. Such was the affable Meekneſs of her Virtue, I never once beheld her melancholy, or peeviſh with thoſe about her; neither did her Goodneſs make her imperious towards others. In this Particular, ſhe was much more cautious than thoſe of her Sex are, who, with every thing to reproach themſelves with, will ſuffer none to eſcape their Reproach. She had a natural Gaiety of Temper, without Levity, which ſhe did not endeavour to ſtifle. She was not, doubtleſs, of the Opinion of many others, who, by being troubleſome in Company, think they make themſelves the more reſpected; and what is no leſs extraordinary, ſhe could amuſe herſelf without Scandal. Convinc'd of her own

Imper-

mperfections, ſhe could eaſily paſs over thoſe of other People. Nothing appear'd to her vicious or criminal, but what is effectually ſo. She did not *deny* herſelf of things that are *allowable*, only to *indulge* herſelf, like *Fatme*, in thoſe that are *forbidden*. Her Houſe had all the Marks of Magnificence, without Luxury. The moſt worthy in *Agra* thought it an Honour to be admitted: All were ambitious of knowing a Lady of ſo conſummate a Character: She had the Admiration and Eſteem of all; and, in ſpite of my natural Perverſeneſs, I was forc'd at laſt to fall in with the general Opinion.

On my Entrance here, indeed, I was ſo prepoſſeſs'd with the Falſhood of *Fatme*, that I ſuſpected very much ſhe was only acting ſome Farce; and I confeſs, at firſt, I confounded the Woman of Virtue with the Hypocrite. I never ſaw a Slave or a *Bramin* enter, but I concluded there would be Matter of Entertainment for me; and you muſt believe I was not a little aſtoniſh'd, after all, to find I was look'd on as a thing of nothing.

Tir'd, at laſt, with the Neglect I ſaw myſelf condemn'd to, and deſpairing of making any curious Obſervations here, I quitted the *Sopha* of this Lady, charm'd with having been convinc'd, that there were ſome

ſome virtuous Women, at leaſt; tho' I can't ſay I deſir'd much to meet with any more ſuch.

Reſuming the active Condition of my Soul, to vary the Scene, I was reſolv'd not to confine my Adventures to Palaces only; and therefore took my next Flight to a Houſe, that I was afraid, at firſt, would not have afforded me a Retreat. It was a little obſcure Building, where you could not expect to meet with much Architecture. I paſs'd into a diſmal ſort of an Apartment, furniſh'd but indifferently; where, nevertheleſs, I happily met with a *Sopha*, which was much ſully'd and hack'd, and ſufficiently teſtify'd that the reſt of the Furniture was all owing to its Merit. Theſe were my firſt Ideas of the Houſe, before I knew to whom it belong'd; and after I did, I ſaw no Cauſe to alter my Opinion.

This Chamber, in effect, ſerv'd as a Retreat to a young Thing, tolerably pretty, who being, as well by her Birth, as in herſelf, what they call *bad Company*, often ſaw, nevertheleſs, Perſons that compoſe, ſay they, the *beſt*. In a word, ſhe was a *Dancer*, that had not long made her Appearance on the Imperial Theatre, and whoſe Fortune and Reputation were not yet eſtabliſh'd, altho' ſhe was particularly known to all the young

Lords

Lords of *Agra*, who promis'd her their Protection, and ſhe in return was indefatigable in her Endeavours to oblige them. I queſtion, however, for all their fine Promiſes, whether there would have been ſo ſudden an Alteration in her Fortune, had not the Emperor's Receiver-General happen'd to take a Fancy to her.

Abdalathif (for that was the Name of the Receiver-General) was not the moſt brilliant Conqueſt for her in the World, either by his Birth, or perſonal Merits. He was naturally of a clowniſh Brutality, and ſince his Riſe to Fortune, had added Inſolence to his other Defects. He diſdain'd to be vulgarly polite; and thinking a Perſon ſufficiently honour'd in his Notice, aſſum'd therefore the more elevated, and diſtant Politeneſs of Perſons of a certain Rank, which in them, the World is pleas'd to call Dignity, but which in *Abdalathif* was the Height of Abſurdity and Impertinence. Born, as he was, in Obſcurity, he not only forgot it, but took a deal of awkward Pains to prove his illuſtrious Original. He ennobled his Meanneſs by perpetually aping the Man of Quality. Inſolent in Freedom, his Familiarity was as ſhocking as his Haughtineſs; and ignoble in Taſte, his Magnificence became as ridiculous. With a moderate Capacity, and yet

a leſs Share of Education, he fancy'd he was equal to *every thing*, and accordingly was for dictating to *every body*. Such as he was, however, it was neceſſary to bear with him; not in reſpect to the Man, but for the ſake of what it was in his Power to beſtow. He was addreſs'd to by Perſons of the firſt Quality in *Agra*, who were his aſſiduous Flatterers; and even their Wives were allow'd to pardon the Rudeneſſes he offer'd them, or leave him nothing to requeſt. Flock'd to, as he was, in *Agra*, he was glad ſometimes to break from the too great Importunities of the Ladies of Quality in queſt of humbler Pleaſures, which, tho' coming from Plebeans, are not leſs Pleaſures, and which, as he had the Inſolence to ſay, were often not more dangerous.

One Night, *Amine* having danced before the Emperor, her new Protector, *Abdalathif* went home with her. He caſt his Eyes diſdainfully round her little Lodging, and ſcarce vouchſafing to look on her, This Place is not fit for you, ſaid he—I muſt have you remov'd— It concerns me, as well as you, to have you more decently ſituated — I ſhould be laugh'd at, if a Girl I thought proper to favour, ſhould not live in a manner to be reſpected. After theſe Words, he ſeated himſelf upon me, and pulling her to him,

him, without any Ceremony, he took all the Liberties he had a mind to; but being the Lover more from *Mode* than *Desire*, he was not very excessive in the use of them.

Amine, whom I had seen behave with so much Caprice and Vanity to the Lords that came to her, far from giving herself any Airs of Familiarity to *Abdalathif*, treated him with profound Respect, and durst not even look upon him, but when he seem'd desirous she should. You please me very well, said he to her, at last——But you must be discreet— cautious of your Conduct — no Freedoms with the young Fellows— or our Acquaintance will be but short—So fare you well, my Girl, added he, getting up —— To-morrow you shall hear further from me— There's no staying to sup with you, as you're equip'd—you shall have every thing necessay—— adieu.

Finishing these Words, he went out, conducted by *Amine*, with great Formality. She soon return'd, and flung herself upon me, prodigiously pleas'd with her good Fortune. Her Mother came in at the same time, and they entertain'd themselves with reckoning up the Jewels, and the other fine Things *Amine* had reason to expect the next Day from the Generosity of *Abdalathif*.

The Mother of *Amine*, tho' a Woman of ſtrict Honour, was the moſt complaiſant of Mothers: She exhorted her Daughter to behave herſelf with Prudence in an Affair, that *Brama* was pleas'd to throw in her Way for her Happineſs; and, comparing their preſent Condition with that they were going to be bleſs'd with, ſhe made a thouſand Reflections on the Providence of the Gods, who never abandon'd thoſe who deſerve it.

She then enumerated the ſeveral Lords who had been the Friends of her Daughter. Of what Signification, ſays ſhe, my Dear, has their Acquaintance been to you! and yet, adds ſhe, who is to blame, but yourſelf? I have told you, over and over, that you are too good-natur'd. Indeed, Child, your Eaſineſs is a great Fault, and your Capriciouſneſs, on certain Occaſions, is full as ridiculous. I am far from perſuading you from your Gratifications —— *Brama*, forbid! I would have you only not to ſacrifice ſo to your Pleaſures, as ſhould make you neglect your Fortune —— But, above all things, a Girl, like you, ſhould not give herſelf up, at any time, to Love; and, I wiſh you had not given room for any Talk on that Head —— In fine, my Dear, you are ſtill young, and I hope, it is not too late to ſee your Error —— Believe me, there's nothing hurts a Perſon of

your

your Condition ſo much as thoſe ſort of Indiſcretions I have heard call'd, *Love gratis.* When once it is known that a Girl has the Misfortune to make a Cuſtom of reſigning herſelf for nothing, every one thinks he has Merit enough to be entitled to the ſame Complaiſance, or at leaſt expects to have it on the eaſieſt Terms. Look upon *Roxana*, *Atalis*, *Elzira*; they cannot be reproach'd with ſuch Weakneſs —— And accordingly *Brama* has rewarded their Conduct —- Without your Beauty, ſee how rich they are! make yourſelf happy by their Example —— Theſe are the Girls of Senſe for me!

Bleſs me! anſwer'd *Amine*, what a Lecture! one had need to have Patience —— Perhaps I may think on't —— But would you really adviſe me, Mother, to be conſtant to the ſhocking Creature? I tell you before-hand, it's impoſſible.

Why no, reſum'd the Mother — I don't ſay we can always command our Hearts; I would only have you either entirely drop your Acquaintance with the Lords about Court, or, at leaſt, to ſee them *incog*; or that they would behave to you with more Decency than they have hitherto done. If you will, I'll ſpeak to them—-Indeed, there's your Favourite, *Maſſoud* — I've nothing to ſay againſt your Choice there —— He's not

known about Town —— you may do any thing with him —— He paſſes for your Couſin—— No Body ſuſpects the contrary—— you are ſafe there —— If you ſtick to him, then, I ſay, my Life for't, *Abdalathif* may be impos'd on as well as other People —— And do you think, Mother, interrupted *Amine*, he will make me all the rich Preſents he talks of? Bleſs me! if he ſhould, as I really believe he will, how I ſhall ſhine it away! 'Tis not out of Vanity, added ſhe, I ſay this; but when one has a certain Rank in Life, one is glad to be like other People—— On this, ſhe fell to reckoning up the Names of the ſeveral Girls of her Acquaintance that would envy her, and telling over again the Finery ſhe ſhould have; the ſingle Thought of which ſeem'd to pleaſe her more than even the making of her Fortune.

The next Morning a Chariot came to take her away; and being curious to ſee what uſe *Amine* would make of her Mother's Advice, I follow'd her. She was conducted to a fine Houſe, ready furniſh'd, in a bye Street, belonging to *Abdalathif*. On her Arrival, I went into a magnificent *Sopha*, placed in a Cabinet, adorn'd with the utmoſt Elegance. Never was poor Thing ſo ſtupify'd with Wonderment, as was *Amine*, at

at what ſhe beheld. After ſatisfying her Curioſity in the ſtricteſt Examination of each Particular, ſhe ſat herſelf down to her Toilet. The rich Veſſels ſhe ſaw it ſpread with, the the Caſquet of Jewels, the Slaves obſequious about her, the Trades-people, and the Workmen that waited her Commands, all heightned ſo her Tranſport, as quite intoxicated her with Grandeur.

When ſhe was come a little to herſelf, ſhe conſider'd what ſort of Part ſhe ought to act in this new Scene. She began with behaving with Haughtineſs to her Slaves, and with Impertinence to her Trades-people: She was troubleſome in her Choice, and whatever ſhe order'd, inſiſted on its being done the very next Day, or ſooner. She then ſat herſelf down again to her Toilet, where ſhe employ'd herſelf a long time, and, till the rich Habits that were making her ſhould be finiſh'd, put on a magnificent Deſhabille, which was deſign'd for a Princeſs of *Agra*, and which ſhe ſcarce thought good enough for her.

She paſs'd the beſt Part of the Day in ſurveying her new-ſelf, admiring afreſh the Magnificence about her, and in expectations of *Abdalathif*. Towards the Evening, in fine, he came. Well, Girl, ſays he to her, how do you like all this? *Amine*

threw herſelf at his Feet, and in the moſt abject Terms thank'd him for all his Favours.

I, who had been always accuſtom'd to good Company, was not a little ſurpriz'd at the Coarſeneſs of her Expreſſions: Not that I had never heard Stupidities before, but they were at leaſt pronounced ſo agreeably, as made one almoſt forget they were low and trifling.

CHAP. V.

Better paſs'd over than read.

BEFORE entering into deeper Converſation, *Abdalathif* drew out a long Purſe full of Gold, and flung it with a careleſs Air on the Table. You may lay that by, ſays he to her— you will not have much Occaſion to uſe it, for I intend to defray the Expences of your Houſe myſelf, as well as find you in every thing is befitting you. I have ſent you a Cook, who, after my own, is the beſt in *Agra*. I propoſe ſupping here very often; and, that we may not

not be always alone, I ſhall ſometimes bring with me ſome Lords of my Acquaintance, and other Men of Wit, I now and then oblige with lending them Money. I'd have you too ſeek out for ſome agreeable Female Companions, who may join with us —— That will add a Gayety to the Table, which I am fond of.

At theſe Words, he conducted her to a little Cabinet, where I was; and the very worthy Mother of *Amine*, who had been preſent at this Converſation, ſhut-to the Door, and withdrew.

I will not preſume, ſays *Amanzei*, interrupting himſelf, to give the whole Detail of a Converſation ſo unworthy your Majeſty's Ear. So artful, however, was *Amine*, that both in her Tenderneſs and her Tranſports, none could ſeem leſs ſo. *Abdalathif* had taken care to pre-inform her, that nothing diſguſted him ſo much as certain ſilly Delicacies in point of Language. As the Deſire ſhe had to pleaſe him, her Education, and the Habits ſhe had contracted, all conſpir'd to his Wiſhes, your Majeſty will eaſily ſuggeſt there paſs'd Diſcourſe too tedious for me to remember, and which, beſides, would not afford your Majeſty any Pleaſure, if I did.

Why ſo? aſk'd the Sultan —— perhaps now I ſhould like it very well —— and therefore conſult your ſelf a little about it —— *Amanzei* may conſult himſelf, if he pleaſes, ſays the Sultaneſs, riſing up; but, as I am certain he cannot recollect himſelf ſo as to give me any Satisfaction, your Majeſty will not be offended that I take my Leave.

What an Air of Modeſty was there now! cries the Sultan — And you think, perhaps, to gall me with it; but undeceive yourſelf, pray — I've a pretty good Notion of the Women; and I remember to have been told by one, who knew them as well as myſelf, or thereabouts, that they never do any thing with ſo much Pleaſure, as when they are forbidden doing it; and delight moſt in that ſort of Talk, which is leaſt for their Credit to hear; conſequently, I ſhall think, if you go, it is not becauſe you have really a mind to go—— But I ſhall not inſiſt on it—— I will wait till I go to Bed, by which means I ſhall hear the whole — Hey! *Amanzei?* *Amanzei* knew better than to contradict the Sultan; and, after having magnify'd his great Prudence in calming his Impatience, proceeded thus:

After the Privacies of *Abdalathif* and *Amine*, in which more was ſaid than done, Supper was ſerv'd up to Table. As I was not in

in the Dining-Room, I can give no Account of their Conversation during the Repast. They return'd, however, a good while after; and, tho' they had supp'd *tete à tete*, they did not seem a jot the soberer. In short, after saying a good many pah Things, *Abdalathaif* fell asleep on the Bosom of *Amine*.

Amine, all obsequious, as she had hitherto been to *Abdalathif*, was not at the bottom very well pleas'd with the great Liberties he took with her; nor was her Vanity less mortify'd to see the little account he made of her. The Compliments, however, he had pay'd her at Supper, on her manner of supporting the Conversation, had given her a good deal more Spirit, and she began to fancy herself deserving enough to be answer'd and talk'd to. In spite of the Gratitude she ow'd to *Abdalathif*, she grew weary of the Constraint he kept her under, and she would have been rash enough to have shewn her Uneasiness, but that *Abdalathif* starting suddenly, with half-clos'd Eyes ask'd her abruptly, what it was a-clock! He rose, however, without waiting for her Answer—Farewel, Girl, says he, saluting her, magisterially — I'll let you know to-morrow whether I can sup with you, or no — On these Words he was going away; but *Amine*, however she might wish his Absence,

did

did all in her Power to keep him; and tho' ſhe carry'd her Pretences even to Tears at his Departure, he was Proof againſt them, and broke looſe from her Arms, ſaying, he lik'd very well ſhe ſhould love him, but that he would not be teiz'd.

As ſoon as he was gone, ſhe rung her Bell, conferring on him, in a low Voice, all the pretty Epithets ſhe could think of, and which he merited. While they were undreſſing *Amine*, her Mother came in, and whiſper'd her— She ſeem'd greatly pleas'd with what was ſaid to her, and you might ſee ſhe hurry'd the Slaves to have done, in order to diſpatch them. She had not been long alone, before her firſt Slave return'd, conducting a frightful, miſhapen Negro; but whom ſhe had no ſooner beheld, than ſhe went with great Eagerneſs to receive him.

Amanzei, ſays the Sultan, ſuppoſe you had not introduc'd this ſame Negro, I fancy your Hiſtory had been full as well— I flatter myſelf, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, he will not ſpoil it— Yes, Sir, reply'd the Sultan, I will ſhew you how he will ſpoil it, ſince you have not the Wit to ſee it—— It is notorious, and I thank Heaven for it! that the firſt Wife of my Grand-father, *Schah-Riar* lay'd with all the Negroes of the Palace; in con-

ſequence

ſequence of which, my ſaid Grandfather caus'd not only her, but all his other Wives, ſucceſſively, to be ſtrangled, till my Grandmother *Scheherazade*, and in her the Cuſtom ceas'd. I therefore take it as a great want of reſpect in you, knowing what has happen'd in my Family, to mention Negroes to me, as if I ought to be tame to the Inſult— I ſhall paſs it over, however, ſince you have introduc'd him; but I charge you let me ſee no more of them — *Amanzei*, after having implor'd the Sultan's Pardon, went on thus: Oh, *Maſſoud!* ſays *Amine* to her Lover, what have I not endur'd theſe two Days I have not ſeen you! How I deteſt the odious Creature that poſſeſſes me! and how wretched one is to be the moſt ſplendid Sacrifice of Fortune!

To all this and more *Maſſoud* anſwer'd little — He ſaid, however, that tho' he lov'd her with the utmoſt Delicacy, he did not regret the Conqueſt ſhe had made of *Abdalathif*. He then advis'd her to make the moſt of him; and afterwards giving a Looſe to all the Fury of vigorous Deſire, there commenc'd a pleaſing kind of Conteſt between them, the Joy of which was not a little heighten'd with the Thoughts of making a Cully of *Abdalathif*. The greateſt Part of the Night was ſpent in repeated mutual

mutual Conflicts. At peep of Day, *Maſſoud* took Leave of the all-contented *Amine*, who with Exceſs of Gratitude thank'd him bountifully for his Company, and he was conducted out by the ſame private Way he had been introduc'd by the Mother.

Amine paſs'd her Morning in trying-on the Habits ſhe had beſpoke, and in ordering others. In this manner ſhe amus'd herſelf, till her Time of dancing before the Emperor. She was brought back by *Abdalathif*, accompany'd with ſome agreeable Female Companions of *Amine*, ſeveral young *Omrahs*, and three of the moſt celebrated Wits of *Agra*. There ſeem'd to be an Emulation among them in extolling the Magnificence of *Abdalathif*, his Taſte, the Nobleneſs of his Mien, the Delicacy of his Wit, and the Solidity of his Underſtanding. I was at a loſs to conceive how Perſons of the Birth and Capacity they ſeem'd to have, could anſwer it to themſelves, to be ſo mean to daub him with ſuch fulſome and lying Encomiums; which they likewiſe extended to *Amine*; but, indeed, they beſtow'd them in a manner that might have ſhewn her, that if it had not been in reſpect to *Abdalathif*, they would have us'd her with as much Familiarity, as now they were ſtudious to avoid it. After theſe Compliments, the Company

diſpers'd

ispers'd themselves into Parties. The Conversation was, according to the Speakers, sometimes smart, sometimes flat, and, in the Course of it, I perceiv'd, the Ladies that were to sup with *Amine*, were treated pretty cavalierly, and which they did not take any great Exceptions at.

At last they went to Supper; but my Soul being, as I observ'd before, excluded Dining-Rooms, I can say nothing as to the Conversation that pass'd there; yet, to judge from the Specimen they gave me before, and that which they afforded me after Supper, it is a Loss I have no great Cause to regret. The Wine and the Encomiums the Company lavish'd on the Merit of the Cook, put *Abdalathif* in such Spirits, he was quite intoxicated, and it was not long before he compos'd himself to Sleep. A young Lord, who had an Interest in procuring *Amine* the Privilege of disposing of herself, took the Liberty to awake him, representing to him, that a Person of his high Office, who had the Direction of Affairs of the last Importance, and could be so ill spar'd from the Public, might yet sometimes allow himself some Moments to unbend, but should never be wedded to his Pleasures; and, in short, pointed out so strongly the Consequence *Abdalathif* was of, both to the

Prince

Prince and People, that he convinc'd him he could not defer a Moment going to Bed, without exposing the State to Danger in the Loss of its most solid Support.

This Reasoning had such Weight with *Abdalathif*, he immediately went away, and the Company with him. By certain Looks I had observ'd to pass between *Amine* and the young Lord above, I imagin'd I should soon see them again. For her Part, after they were all gone, she flew with a negligent Air to her Toilet, and being disencumber'd from a Load of Ornament, more troublesome to Pleasure, than Flattering to Vanity, she order'd her Slaves to leave her. At the very Instant almost, the venerable Mother of *Amine*, who, doubtless, had taken Compassion of the young Lord, purely from a Sense of his Sufferings, and not from the grosser Considerations of Interest, introduc'd him with great Discretion into the Apartment of her Daughter, and did not retire till after he had given her positive Assurance, on his Word, of even not hinting at the least Proposition that should derogate from a Modesty so consummate as was that of *Amine*.

Certainly, says *Amine* to the young Lord, when they were alone, I must be hurry'd on by the most extravagant Passion to do what

I do

I do! Here I am deceiving the moſt generous of Benefactors, whom I ought to be faithful to, at leaſt, tho' I cannot love him. O dreadful Power of Love! I am ſenſible of my Fault, yet cannot reſiſt it — O, why wilt thou force me ſo far out of my uſual way of acting! —— Only to lay me under the greater Obligation, my Dear, anſwers the young Lord, going to take her in his Arms —— Nay—reply'd ſhe, puſhing him from her — I vow I will not ſuffer this —— I promis'd you my good Opinion, my Company, to have the Pleaſure of ſeeing you —— If I were to go further, I ſhould be a perfidious, ungrateful Wretch, for which I ſhould hate myſelf——Why, my dear Soul, ſays his Lordſhip— what is come to thee! why all theſe ſilly Scruples? I ſwear, I believe thee the honeſteſt Creature alive; but of what uſe is it? Doſt think I come here for this only?

You very much deceive yourſelf, anſwer'd ſhe, if you think of having any thing elſe from me. What, tho' I do not love the Lord *Abdalathif*, it is enough, I have vow'd Fidelity to him, and nothing ſhall make me break it.

Why, this is very well put, my Dear, reply'd the young Lord, ſmiling — ſince you have made a Vow, Child, I have too much

respect for it —— I am dumb — and, for the Singularity of the thing, I give you Leave to continue in your Fidelity —— But, prithee, tell me — Have you made a great many such Vows in your Life? You may jest as much as you please, my Lord, answer'd *Amine*; but really in that Article no Body is more scrupulous— Nay—you don't surprize me at all, reply'd he—— you publick-spirited Ladies are very scrupulous, to be sure! and infinitely more so, doubtless, than your Women of Virtue! — But, prithee, no more of this Vow— if I must be plagu'd with it, let it be an Hour or two hence, and don't make me come here to pass the Night in talking of such Stuff — It's very true — I own myself in some sort the Occasion of your coming, answer'd she awkwardly— But why did you dazzle one, then so, with your brilliant Promises? —— What a Quickness of Wit you have, my Dear, says he—-The Remembrance of them, I find, had like to have spoil'd all—There— added he, pulling out a Purse— There's what I promis'd you; and I'm a Man of Honour— You'll find wherewithal to cure you of your Scruples, and release you of all your Vows, you have ever made. Well— you're very pleasant, I swear, answer'd *Amine*, seizing the Purse; but, after all, you know me

me but little — I can aſſure you, if it was not more out of Inclination than . . . . . Aye! to be ſure, interrupted he — But, to prove how generous I am, I'll diſpenſe with your Thanks, and the prodigious Inclination you talk of, which I confeſs had not much Weight with me in the Agreement; tho' I think I pay you as well as if I had been the firſt; and that, you know, is not according to Rule. As to that, anſwer'd *Amine*, I think, if one makes a Sacrifice of one's Fidelity to a Perſon . . . . . Faith! interrupted he, if I were to pay thee only in Proportion to that, thou would'ſt have nothing — But, prithee, let us come to ſome Concluſion — Tho' you have an Infinity of Wit, I muſt tell you the Converſation begins to flag.

How impatient ſoever the young Lord was, he could not hinder the prudent *Amine* from counting the Money he had juſt given her — It was not, ſhe ſaid, that ſhe ſuſpected his Honour, but he might be miſtaken himſelf — In fine, ſhe did not comply with his Deſires, till ſhe was very ſure he had not been deceived in the Calculation.

As ſoon as Day began to appear, the Mother of *Amine* came, and gave Notice to the young Lord, that it was time to retire. He did not ſeem much to regard her; but *Amine* begg'd him earneſtly to conſider her Repu-

Reputation; yet, neither the Consideration of that, nor all her Entreaties, would have avail'd, if she had not made him hope, that he should be the favour'd he, as often as she could conveniently steal a Night from *Abdalathif*.

Besides *Abdalathif*, *Massoud*, and the young Lord, with whom she sometimes kept her Word, *Amine*, refining upon her Mother's useful Instructions, receiv'd indifferently all who thought her worth the purchasing: *Bonzes*, *Bramins*, *Imars*, *Men of War*, *Cadis*, People of any Nation, Rank, or Age; none were rejected, having a universal Compassion for the Sighs of all Mankind, that came up to her Price. True it is, nevertheless, she had not forgot her Points of Honour, and her Scruples, and therefore exacted more from Strangers, especially such as she look'd on as Infidels, than from her own Countrymen, and those who profess'd the same Law with herself. She distinguish'd with extreme Nicety in this Matter: Her Complaisance to a *Guebre* just stood him in ten times as much as it did to a *Mahometan*, because she happen'd to have his manner of Worship in Abhorrence; for she thought very justly, that so much Remorse merited such a Difference in the Valuation.

Whether

Whether *Abdalatkif* depended on his Superiority too much, to believe that *Amine* durſt preſume to be falſe to him; or whether he as weakly rely'd on the Proteſtations he had made him of never ſeeing any Body but his own dear ſelf, certain it is, he carry'd on a long Intimacy with her in the moſt profound Confidence; and, but for an unforeſeen Accident, not without Example, however, it is as certain, he might have continu'd in his Credulity to his Diſſolution.

O! I take it, interrupted the Sultan —— Some-body, to be ſure, told him of her Infidelity —— Not ſo, pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei* —— O, no — reſum'd the Sultan — now I think again, it was quite the Reverſe — 'tis eaſy to be gueſs'd — why, he ſurpriz'd her himſelf —— Far from it, pleaſe your Majeſty, reply'd *Amanzei* —— Glad would he have been to have come off with ſuch Conviction —— Nay then, ſays *Schah-Baham*, I muſt own, you have poz'd me — But, after all, what Affair is it of mine? and what Buſineſs have I to be plaguing my Brain with what does not concern me?

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Not more extraordinary than entertaining.

THE luckless Moment, that was to snatch from *Amine* all her Grandeur, Jewels, and Riches, was now drawing near; when all her Consolation for lost Magnificence, would be the Remembrance only of a pompous Dream, and in the Hopes, that *Abdalathif*, could he reflect, would not be less tormenting to himself.

For some Days, I had observ'd in *Amine* an unusual Melancholy: Her House too, at Night, was all shut close; and in the Day she saw no Body but *Abdalathif*; and all the Letters she receiv'd, seem'd to bring her only fresh Subject of Vexation. I bewilder'd myself with endeavouring to guess the Occasion of all this, but to little Purpose; and at last I was weak enough to believe, that a pungent Remorse was the sole Cause of that Anguish of Soul she seem'd overwhelm'd with.

The

The Knowledge I had of her Character, confeſs, ought to have given me other Thoughts of her; but, not being able to athom her Inquietude, I was inſenſibly led nto the Miſtake; and it was not long, however, before I was undeceiv'd.

One Morning, as *Amine* was at her Toilet, taken-up with perplexing, thoughtful, melancholy Reflections, *Abdalathif* came in. The Crimſon ſtrait roſe in her Cheek at the ight of him; and ſhe was the more alarm'd at this unexpected Viſit, as he was ot accuſtom'd to come to her in a Morning: In ſhort, her Confuſion was ſuch, ſhe ould ſcarce ſpeak, or look. By the contracted Brow of *Abdalathif*, and the furious lances he gave her from time to time, it as not difficult to ſee, that he was rack'd ith Thoughts, which, probably, ſhe had iven too much room for. *Amine*, doubtlſs, knew the Cauſe of his Anxiety, and erefore avoided aſking any Queſtions concerning it. *Abdalathif* obſerv'd a gloomy lence for a conſiderable Space — at laſt, id he to her, in ſullen Irony, So, Madam! e not you very pretty, do you think? ow innocent too you look to Day! And w prettily it could ſay, that I was the lwark of her Fortune, and you would be firm to me as a Rock — All this is very fine,

fine, is not it, my Dear? —— But know, Miſtreſs! Care ſhall be taken to place you, where you'll be taught more Prudence, and be compell'd to your good Behaviour, at leaſt, for one while.

For Heaven's ſake! anſwer'd *Amine*, with a haughty Air, what's all this Nonſenſe? you don't direct it to me, ſure! if ſo, I would adviſe you, Sir, to think a little before you ſpeak.

The Inſolence of *Amine* on this Occaſion was ſo unexpected, that it even confounded *Abdalathif* himſelf; but his Rage getting the better, he made her the keeneſt Reproaches, and treated her with all the Contempt he thought ſhe deſerv'd. *Amine* was beginning to juſtify herſelf; but *Abdalathif*, being, doubtleſs, ſatisfy'd of the Proof of what he accus'd her of, very roughly bad her hold her Tongue.

Amine, however, in ſpite of his loud Complaints, reſolv'd to avoid ſhewing ſhe thought they were made on her ſcore; and therefore fell upon *Abdalathif*, in her Turn, with all the Violence of Female-Reproach. She tax'd him with his Injuſtice, his Perfidies; invented many more; and, even proceeded to arraign the miſerable Choice of his Miſtreſſes, and his Taſte, in every thing; with which ſhe ſhould not, however, have upbraided

braided him, added ſhe, but for the extreme Concern ſhe could not help expreſſing for every thing that was of Conſequence to his Intereſt.

She was, in ſhort, ſo bare-fac'd in her Impudence, that *Adalathif* could ſcarce restrain himſelf from loſing all Patience. *Amine*, perceiving that he was not to be impos'd on by her Haughtineſs, nor by her Reproaches, and dreading the tragical Conſequences of the Fury ſhe had kindled in him, as the laſt Game ſhe had to play, had Recourſe to Tears, and Submiſſion; but in vain her Artifice: *Abdalathif* was not to be moved; whatever was the Cauſe, I will not ſay; but never did I ſee a Man ſo much enrag'd! Moment after Moment he was ſeiz'd with frantic Starts of Horror, during which, if he did not cruſh every thing in the Houſe to Atoms, it was becauſe it all belong'd to him. This wiſe Conſideration prevented a Havock, which might have been of Eaſe to him, while his Struggles again to reſtrain himſelf from committing it, made him the more incens'd againſt *Amine*. But what moſt tranſported him, and ſwell'd his Rage beyond all Bounds, was the diſtracting Thought, that ſuch a Wretch as ſhe ſhould dare to injure a Perſon of his Conſideration —— This was to him a Thing beyond Conceptions,

tion, as well as beyond the calmeſt Reaſon to ſupport.

After having vented all the Impertinence that his Fury and his Pride alternately ſuggeſted, he ſeiz'd every thing in general he had given *Amine*. She expected, indeed, to be abandon'd by *Abdalathif*, and, while ſhe ey'd the Moveables about her, ſhe was far from being diſconſolate; but when ſhe found herſelf going to be ſtripp'd of all, ſtrait ſhe ſent forth a Peal of Skrieks and bitterest Lamentations: Her Horror trembled, and ſhe throbb'd with very Agony. Her Mother coming in, threw herſelf at the Feet of *Abdalathif*, clung to his Robe—beſeeching him— ſtruck her Breaſt—wrung her Hands— tore her Hair— and hoping, I ſuppoſe, to ſoften him, confeſs'd, that what had happen'd was all owing to a curſed *Bonze!*

Far from regarding what was ſaid of the *Bonze*, it ſeem'd rather to make *Abdalathif* more determin'd in his Rigour. Alas! added the Mother of *Amine*, very piteouſly, we are juſtly puniſh'd for having confided in an Infidel. My Daughter knows how much I was againſt it, and that I always ſaid ſhe would one Day feel the Smart of it.

During all this Buſtle, *Abdalathif*, having an Inventory of every thing he had given

Amine

Amine in his Hand, ſaw the whole reſtor'd, Article by Article. That done, ſaid he to *Amine*, with a more compos'd Air, As to the Money I gave you, I ſhall not take that; and you muſt blame yourſelf, Child, if you have no more. This Mortification, I hope, will make you more prudent for the future, and I really wiſh it may —— You are now at your Liberty to go, added he; I have no more Occaſion for you here; and thank Heaven, that I have not carry'd my Reſentment further.

Finiſhing theſe Words, he order'd his Slaves to ſee them to the Door, with as little Emotion at the groſs Invectives ſhe loaded him with, as at the Tears he had ſeen her ſhed.

The Curioſity I had to ſee the uſe *Amine* would make of her Humiliation, made me reſolve, in ſpite of my Averſion to her Manners, to follow her to that obſcure Habitation, whence *Abdalathif* had taken her, and to which ſhe now return'd, cover'd with Shame, and Grief, that ſhe had not had it in her Power to ruin him.

It was in this melancholy Place, that I was witneſs of her Deſpair, and of the Imprecations of her virtuous Mother. It gave them, however, on the whole, ſome Con-

ſolation, that they had not loſt their all in their late Shipwreck of Fortune.

Well, Child, ſaid the Mother of *Amine*, one Day, is our Misfortune then ſo great, it cannot be retriev'd? I grant, that the clumſy Creature you had, was Liberality itſelf; yet is there no other like him you equally may pleaſe? Even ſuppoſing you meet with none ſo rich, will you for that deſpair? No, Child — what is wanting in Specie muſt be made up in Number: If four will not do to counter-ballance his Loſs, why then have four dozen, or more, if neceſſary. You will ſay, perhaps, all this is but Chance-work: That's very true, Child; but, till we are above every thing, and afraid of nothing, there's no getting the better of Misfortune.

Willing, as *Amine* might be, to reap the Fruits of this ſage Advice, the Deſpair ſhe was in hinder'd her from putting it in practice ſo ſoon as ſhe could have wiſh'd. Beſides, her Adventure with *Abdalathif*, had given her ſuch a Character in *Agra* for Inconſtancy, that, except the faithful *Maſſoud*, whoſe Love was Proof to every thing, I ſaw no Company come to her for a long time but Female Viſiters; rather, indeed, to inſult her, than adminiſter Conſolation in her Diſgrace.

Time,

Time, however, that brings every thing about, wore off, at laſt, the bad Impreſſions entertain'd of *Amine*. People began to fancy they ſaw a Change in her, and that the Time ſhe had had for Reflection muſt have cur'd her of her exceſſive Ficklenefs of Nature. Lovers, in conſequence, return'd —— A *Perſian* Lord, who was juſt arriv'd at *Agra*, and but ſlenderly furniſh'd with *Anecdotes*, beheld *Amine* with Admiration, and grew the more paſſionate, as one of thoſe obliging Perſons, who generouſly employ their Time in procuring Pleaſure for others, aſſur'd him, that if he had the good Fortune to be the Taſte of *Amine*, the Obligation to him would be the greater, as it would be the firſt Weakneſs ſhe ſhould have to reproach herſelf with.

Any other Body would have thought the Thing impoſſible; the *Perſian* only call'd it extraordinary. Fir'd with the Novelty, and excited ſtill more with having ocular Proof of the ſtubborn Virtue of *Amine*, he purchas'd, on the higheſt Terms, Favours, that were now rated at the loweſt, and which, however, were valu'd at more than they deſerv'd.

The dirty Habitation of *Amine*, was once more left for a magnificent Palace, adorn'd with all the Luxury of *India*. Whether

Amine made a wiſe uſe, or not, of her new Fortune, I cannot ſay: Grown weary now with fathoming her Soul, I went in ſearch of Objects more worthy of Contemplation, tho' at the bottom, perhaps, full as contemptible; but, being more refin'd, the Shock was leſs, and they amus'd me more.

I therefore took my Flight to a Houſe, which, by the Magnificence and exquiſite Taſte, that ſhew'd itſelf in every thing, I knew to be one of my favourite Retreats, where Gallantry and Pleaſure, and where even the *Failing* itſelf, diſguis'd under the Appearance of Love, embeliſh'd with every Delicacy and Elegance, never preſents itſelf but in the moſt engaging Form.

The Charms of the beautiful Miſtreſs of this Palace, added to the ſoft Languiſh in her Look, made me imagine I ſhould not long want Amuſement: Withal ſhe lov'd and was belov'd; was warmly beſieg'd by her Lover, and wavering in herſelf; all which promis'd ſtill more I ſhould not always be indifferent to her; but, notwithſtanding this, I remain'd ſome time in her Sopha, without her vouchſafing even once to ſit upon me; and, with all the Merit and eager Deſires of her Lover, he was yet far from a Conqueſt.

Phenime

Phenime (for that was the Charmer's Name) found it hard to resign her Virtue; and *Zulma*, too respectful a Lover to be daring, waited till Time and Assiduities should inspire her with Sentiments as favourable for him, as those he had express'd for her. I, who saw further into *Phenime*, could not help wondering, that he knew so little of his Happiness. *Phenime*, it's true, had never acknowledg'd her Passion; but her Eyes perpetually spoke it. Did he talk to her of the most indifferent Thing? In spite of herself, and even without knowing it, you heard a soft Cadence in her Voice, and the most melting Tenderness stole into her Phrase. The more was her Constraint before him, the more she shew'd her Love. There was nothing in her Lover, that seem'd to her indifferent: She was in pain for him in every thing; and often those she least regarded, in appearance, were more civilly treated. Sometimes she would impose silence on him, and even in the instant forgetting her Commands, continue the Conversation she just before chose to have finish'd. Every time she found herself alone with him (and without designing it, perhaps, she gave him numberless Occasions) an involuntary, keen Emotion of Tenderness took Possession of her. If in the Course of some interesting Narra-

tive, *Zulma*, in a ſudden Tranſport, happen'd to preſs her Hand to his Lip, or throw himſelf at her Feet, *Phenime* was alarm'd, but not *frighten'd*; *complain'd tenderly* of the Liberty, but was not *angry*.

And yet, interrupted the Sultan, he was not a bit the freer for't? —— No, certainly, Sir, anſwer'd *Amanzei*; the more belov'd . . . . . The more Fool he, ſaid the Sultan; that I ſee plainly —— Love, Sir, reſum'd *Amanzei*, is never ſo timid, as when.... . . . O yes! interrupted the Sultan again — Timid! a very fine Story, truly! could not the Blockhead ſee he was only teizing the Lady? Had I been in her Place, I'd never have ſeen his Face more—— I can tell you that.

Doubtleſs, reply'd *Amanzei*, with a vain Coquet, *Zulma* ran the Riſk of being diſcarded; but with *Phenime*, who really ſought not to be conquer'd, his Modeſty was plac'd to the Account of Merit. Beſides, the tenderer he was of the Scruples of *Phenime*, the ſurer did he make himſelf of the Victory. A Moment given by Caprice, if it is not critically ſeiz'd, never, perhaps, offers itſelf again; but when it is given by Love, methinks, the leſs haſte you make to ſeize it, the ſooner it will ſurrender —— For all that, reply'd *Schah-Baham*, I have heard ſay, that Women

Women don't like People that are ſlow of Underſtanding—— That may be, ſometimes, anſwer'd *Amanzei*; but *Phenime* was of a different way of thinking, and never lov'd *Zulma* ſo much, as when he had been more reſpectful, even than ſhe herſelf had wiſh'd him to be —— But, pray tell me, aſk'd the Sultan again, did he uſe to be often out of his Gueſs?

Yes, pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei*—— and ſometimes ſo egregiouſly as made him ridiculous. One Day, for inſtance, *Phenime* was indulging herſelf in the tendereſt Thoughts of her *Zulma*—— ſhe had no Idea, but for him— O that the dear Creature was but here, ſhe cry'd! — Her Imagination growing ſtill warmer by degrees, ſhe gave all the Marks of a voluptuous Diſorder, and it was at its Criſis, when *Zulma* preſented himſelf before her—Her Emotions increas'd; her Colour came and went, and, in fine, ſhe ceas'd to bluſh on ſeeing him—— O! could *Zulma* but have gueſs'd the Cauſe that made *Phenime* bluſh! Had he but dar'd to preſs her! —But, fancying he had already diſobey'd too much in the innocent Freedoms of the Night before, he employ'd himſelf ſolely in aſking her Pardon, at a time ſhe would have been offended at nothing.

Oh! the Buzzard, cry'd the Sultan— It's ſcarce credible that People can be ſo ſtupid! — Let it not ſurprize your Majeſty, reply'd *Amanzei*— for, ſince I have been a Sopha, I've obſerv'd more lucky Moments loſt than ſeiz'd. Women, accuſtom'd continually to conceal their Thoughts from us, are induſtrious, above all, to diſſemble the Springs that actuate their Tenderneſs; and ſhe has little to boaſt of in never having fallen, who owes the Happineſs leſs to her Virtue, than to the Opinion ſhe has had the Art to create of it in others.

I remember, that being in the Houſe of a Woman eſteem'd for her exemplary Virtue, I continu'd there a pretty while without ſeeing any thing, that bely'd the Opinion the World had of her. True it is, ſhe was far from being handſome, and it muſt be allow'd, that no Women are ſo eaſily virtuous, as thoſe who want Charms. To the plainneſs of her Face, ſhe join'd a harſh ſeverity of Manners, no leſs forbidding than her Figure. No one had hitherto attempted to ſoften her Heart, and it was thought impoſſible to make an Impreſſion there. By I know not what Chance, a Man more daring, or more capricious than others, or who had no great Opinion of the Virtue of Women, being one Day alone with her, very

very frankly told her, that he thought her amiable; and, tho' he said it coldly enough not to be believ'd, a Speech so new to her made an Impression on her. She answer'd modestly, but with Confusion, that she was not form'd to inspire such Sentiments. He then fell to kissing her Hand; upon which she seem'd all perplex'd and trembling: Her Colour came; her Eyes begun to sparkle; sure Tokens of the Disorder were going to be kindled. He renew'd his Efforts, clasping her in his Arms with Transport, and vowing she had rais'd the strongest Passion in him. I know not what he did, during her Agitation of Mind, that gave her Proof, that what he said was true; but this rigid Modesty began to yield to Evidence. Neither do I know the Nature of the Proof he offer'd in order to convince her; but, certain it is, it finish'd her Defeat. But, whether she was impos'd on by such strange Appearances, or thro' very want of Strength, sink in these Moments beneath the Weight of her Virtue, she scarce had the Decency to make Resistance, and yielded with more ease than even Women accustom'd to resist the least. This Example, and many others of the same kind, incline me to believe, that there are few virtuous Women but may be attack'd with Success; and that there are

none

none ſooner overcome than thoſe, who ſeem the moſt averſe to Love— But, to return to the two Lovers, whoſe Hiſtory I was giving to your Majeſty.

CHAP. VII.

In which you will find frequent Occaſions to find Fault.

ONE Night, quitting *Phenime*, *Zulma* aſk'd her when he might hope to ſee her again? As ſhe began to be afraid of him, yet could not live without him, after ſome Heſitation, ſhe ſaid he might come the next Day.

Phenime, ſenſible of the Danger there was in being alone with him, reſolv'd his Viſits ſhould be as public as poſſible for the future; but, on ſecond Thoughts, the Day he was to come, ſhe order'd herſelf to be deny'd to all but *Zulma*. To her this ſeem'd the beſt; for the leſs Opportunity he had of venting his Paſſion, the more it ſhew'd itſelf by a thouſand different Ways, as viſible to prying Witneſſes, as to Love itſelf; and who would

would chuſe to be expos'd to malicious Conſtructions? Another Reaſon why ſhe thought *Zulma* leaſt dangerous alone, was, that then he always preſerv'd the moſt ſcrupulous Reſpect, whereas before the World he was not ſtrict enough: Therefore it was become abſolutely neceſſary never to ſee him in Company but as ſeldom as poſſible.

Beſides, the poor Gentleman droop'd to that degree when he could not diſcloſe himſelf with Freedom, it would have been too barbarous to deprive him of a Pleaſure ſhe run ſo little Riſque in granting.

Phenime determin'd herſelf by this ſort of Reaſoning, which, as ſhe imagin'd at leaſt, was founded in Cuſtom and common Senſe, but was in Reality the pure Dictates of her Love for *Zulma*.

Even on that very Day ſhe was ſtrongly tempted to compleat his Happineſs; but yet urg'd all that prudent Women could in the Article of oppoſing her Inclinations; at the ſame time, in common Juſtice, ſhe dwelt upon the Love and Conſtancy of *Zulma*: His fond Readineſs to oblige her was pleaſing to Remembrance; nor did ſhe forget to obſerve, that ſtill he preferr'd rather to be deceiv'd, than be perfidious. *Zulma*, beſides, was young, well made, had all the Tendre of the Soul: Perfections ſhe yet

fancy'd

fancy'd ſhe was not affected by, but which had the higheſt Influence upon her.

What occaſion was there for all this Fuſs, in the Name of wonder! aſk'd the Sultan? The Woman paſſes my Underſtanding—— Eight Years Virtue— anſwer'd *Amanzei* — to be robb'd of all the Merit of eight Years Virtue in a Minute . . . . . A very great Loſs, truly! cry'd the Sultan.

To a thinking Woman, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, it is more conſiderable than your Majeſty imagines. Virtue is ever accompany'd with Tranquility, and tho' not very delightful, is yet ſatisfactory. A Woman, happy enough to be poſſeſs'd of it, contented in herſelf, cannot but behold herſelf with great Complaiſance: Her conſcious Eſteem is juſtify'd by the Deference of others; and the Pleaſure ſhe ſacrifices, equals not that which reſults from the Sacrifice.

O! pray tell me, ſaid the Sultan—— do you think, if I had been a Woman, that I ſhould have been virtuous? —— Really, Sir, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, ſomewhat amaz'd at the Queſtion, I cannot ſay—— And, why can't you, aſk'd the Sultan, haſtily? —— Well— is it poſſible, ſaid the Sultaneſs, your Majeſty can aſk ſuch Queſtions! — I don't ſpeak to you, Madam, reply'd he— I only want *Amanzei* to tell me, if I ſhould have been virtuous,

nuous, and I insist on his giving me a direct Answer— I believe, Sir, in the affirmative, reply'd *Amanzei*— Why, then you are devilishly mistaken, return'd *Schah-Baham*— I should have been quite the reverse. But, let not what I say, added he, addressing himself to the Sultaness, give you a Surfeit of being virtuous— Do you hear, Madam? — My Thoughts on this Head concern myself only, and, ten to one, if I was a Woman, but I should act otherwise. Upon these sorts of Subjects, after all, every one thinks as he likes; and, for my part, I lay no Restraint on any Body — Your Royal Master, said the Sultaness to *Amanzei*, smiling, seems at a Loss, and I dare answer, would be oblig'd to you, if you thought fit to go on with your Tale. Is not that very pleasant, now, reply'd the Sultan? would not one think it was I that interrupted it?

Zulma, resum'd *Amanzei*, return'd the next Day; and, tho' it was sooner than *Phenime* expected him, she gave him to understand he came very late.

Dear Accusation! Heavenly Complaint! cry'd he to her, tenderly— How happy does it make me! — *Phenime* perceiv'd not till now the Force of what she had said: She fain would have turn'd it, but knew not what to say. *Zulma* smil'd to see her Perplexity, and

and ſhe bluſh'd to ſee him ſmile. He flung himſelf at her Feet, and kiſs'd her Hand with Infinity of Ardor: She made a faint of pulling it away; but, finding he made no Efforts to with-hold it, ſhe quietly re-ſign'd it.

To all the tender Things were ſaid by *Zulma*, *Phenime* gave no Anſwer; but liſten'd to him with a Greedineſs of Attention, for which ſhe, doubtleſs, would have reproach'd herſelf, could ſhe have conſtru'd her Emotions. Her Boſom happen'd to be a little expos'd, and perceiving his Eyes to turn that Way, ſhe began to adjuſt her Handkerchief; on which, cry'd *Zulma*, Cruel Decency!

This Exclamation was ſufficient to make *Phenime* deſiſt from the needleſs Caution; and therefore ſhe permitted *Zulma* to enjoy the ſlender Favour, without Reſerve; but, that he might not gueſs it Deſign in her, pretended as if ſomething wanted ſettling in her Head-dreſs. Nothing obſtructed now the raviſh'd Eyes of *Zulma* from beholding the lovely Objects *Phenime* had left vacant. She, in return, gave herſelf a looſe to the Pleaſure of being admir'd by one ſhe lov'd. Her Eyes roll'd, languiſhing on *Zulma*: The ſwift Ideas magnify'd in Tenderneſs,

and

and in her Posture ſhe appear'd a fair enraptur'd Statue.

O, the Devil, cry'd the Sultan! What, could not he ſee that neither? O! the Blunderbuſs! the barbarous Beaſt!

Great, as was the ſoft Confuſion of *Phenime*, purſu'd *Amanzei*, ſhe yet perceiv'd her Lover's was not leſs; and equally fearing the Emotion of *Zulma*, and her own, ſhe ſtarted ſuddenly from her Seat. He made ſome Efforts to detain her, and not having the Power to ſpeak, he endeavour'd, by bathing her Hands with the Tears he ſhed, to make her comprehend how much he was touch'd with her cruel Reſolution. This moving Incident wrought up *Phenime* to the extremeſt Tenderneſs, but Love not yet having compleated his Conqueſt, ſhe triumph'd over her own, and her Lover's Deſires.

As ſoon as ſhe had diſengag'd herſelf from the Arms of *Zulma*, ſhe made Signs for him to riſe, which he obey'd. For ſome time they beheld each other with a profound Silence; at laſt *Phenime*, breaking it, propos'd ſitting down to play. Altho' the Motion appear'd ill-tim'd to *Zulma*, he was far from diſputing with her Will, and prepar'd to gratify her with as much Alacrity, as if himſelf had been the firſt Propoſer. This freſh Proof of his Submiſſion, touch'd

Phenime

Phenime anew; and I ſaw ſhe was almoſt ready to aſk his Pardon for a whim, which now ſhe found ridiculous.

Unlucky for *Zulma*'s Wiſhes, ſhe remain'd not long in theſe Sentiments; for the more tender Diſpoſitions ſhe found herſelf in towards him, the more dangerous ſhe thought it now to let him ſee her Weakneſs. She ſet down therefore to play, as the beſt Remedy to divert ſtrange Thoughts, but ſoon grew tired, and found how weak a Reſource that was againſt the dear Idea of *Zulma*. She did not, however, believe, that the languid Heavineſs ſhe felt, was occaſion'd by him, but attributed it wholly to the dull Game ſhe had choſen; and therefore her Lover now muſt chuſe another. Fetching a Sigh, he readily comply'd, and ſhe ſeem'd burſting with the like Emotion. But while ſhe ſtruggled to ſuppreſs each languiſhing Idea, the charming Diſorder ſeem'd to increaſe by Oppoſition, and take entire Poſſeſſion of her Soul. Thus loſt in Thought, ſhe aſcrib'd her pleas'd Attention to the Game, while it was all employ'd upon *Zulma*.

The dejected Air ſhe obſerv'd in him, the deep Sighs he fetch'd, the Tears he ſeem'd juſt ready to let fall, with the Reſpect he yet preſerv'd, compleated the diſ-

ſolving

olving of *Phenime*'s Heart. Devoted all o ſoft Senſation, ſhe let looſe her Eyes upon him unreſtrain'd; and, whether her Confuſion, or the Looks of *Zulma*, were too potent for her, ſhe ſtrait reclin'd her Head upon his Hand. *Zulma*, beholding her in this kind Attitude, fell in a Fervor of Devotion at her Feet, which *Phenime* was too much taken-up to regard, or did not incline to hinder. He took the Advantage of this enchanting Weakneſs to revel on the Hand that was diſengag'd, which he kiſs'd with a Tranſport ſuperior to what an ordinary Lover even proves in the ultimate Enjoyment.

Bleſs'd with a Favour he had not room to hope, he ſought for further Indications of his Fate in the Eyes of *Phenime*. Her Head was ſtill in the ſame reclining Poſture, and gently raiſing it to view, ſhew'd him the melting Fair-one all in Tears. A Scene ſo unexpected drew the ſame from *Zulma*. Ah! *Phenime!* cry'd he, ſending a big Emotion from his Heart- — Ah! *Zulma!* anſwer'd ſhe, what is't I feel! At theſe Words, they beheld each other with that Tenderneſs, that Fire, thoſe ſilent Languiſhments, that charming Abſence of one's ſelf, which Love alone, and the moſt perfect Love can give.

Zulma

Zulma, in fine, with a Voice interrupted by his Sighs, resum'd the Conversation. Ah, *Phenime!* said he, in a kind of Extacy, if you at last are touch'd with my fond Passion, and yet are fearful to give your Love plain Utterance, Oh! let those Eyes, those Eyes I so adore, divulge the happy Tidings to my Soul. No, *Zulma*, answer'd she—— let me rather boast in Terms downright, I love my dearest *Zulma*, instead of taking from him a Triumph he deserves so well. Yes, that I love my *Zulma*, my Mouth, my Heart, my Eyes, my all, shall, and does declare it. Oh! my *Zulma!* tenderest of Men! I knew no Happiness till now, this delightful Moment, that gives me the Power to shew you my whole Soul. At Accents so extremely passionate, and so little hop'd by *Zulma*, he was well nigh ready to expire with Transport: But in a Trance-like Absence, as she threw him, he did not forget, that it was in the Power of *Phenime* to render him still more happy. And, tho' he was sensible the Declaration she had made, authoriz'd a thousand things, which till now he had not presum'd to think of, still his Respect surmounted his Desires, and he chose rather to wait till she was pleas'd absolutely to decide his Fate.

Too

Too well *Phenime* knew her *Zulma*, to iſtake the Motive of his ſlacken'd Ardor; e for that Reaſon was tenderer than ever; d yielding at laſt to a Flood of ſoft Sentions; ſhe flew to his Arms with an Imtuoſity of Fondneſs, that Language and nagination, however ſtrong, can faintly cture.

What Truth! what Virtue in their Tranſrts! Never had I beheld ſo affecting a ene! Both were intoxicated, and both em'd loſt to Reaſon: nor were they actued by that Flaſh of Fancy, which creates eſire, but by the ſoft Fury, the true Diium of Love; ſo often ſought, ſo rarely be felt in— *Ye Gods! ye Gods!* ſaid *lma*, from time to time, without the wer of uttering more— *Phenime* preſs'd r *Zulma* to her, with an eager Tenderſs; broke looſe to look upon him; again e claſp'd him, and again look'd on him, ing, Ah! *Zulma!* how late do I know y Happineſs!

Theſe Words were follow'd by a ſublime ence, which the Soul delights in, when nguage wants Expreſſion to convey its ore refin'd Affections.

There was a nameleſs ſomething ſtill that *lma* wanted; and *Phenime*, to whom his rdors had render'd it now not leſs neceſſary

ſary than to himſelf, far from oppoſing his Deſires, yielded a blind Obedience to them. He ſeem'd more enterprizing, and ſhe to be more paſſive: The more ſhe had reſiſted, the more ſhe thought it her Duty to recede to him the Purchaſe of her Reſiſtance; and thereby make him a ſort of Satisfaction for all the various Conflicts ſhe had given him. She would now have even bluſh'd to allay and check the Pleaſure by a falſe Delicacy, which, by blending Remorſe and Love together, leaves in the midſt of the Bleſſing a greater yet to wiſh for. The ſincere, the enraptur'd *Phenime* would have thought it an Injury to her *Zulma* to rob him of any the leaſt Endearments he was the Inſpirer of. She met his Careſſes, therefore, with an Ardor inexpreſſible; and, as ſome Minutes before ſhe made a Merit of Reſiſtance, ſhe now made it her whole Ambition to convince him of her vaſt Complacency.

In one of their ſhort Intervals, which they fill'd with a thouſand tender Tranſports, ſaid *Zulma* to his *Phenime*, with a dying Fondneſs, You have ſhewn ſuch ſtrong Sincerity thro' all your Conduct, that, fearful, as was, I could not help diſcerning ſometimes that you needs muſt love me: Say why then, *Phenime*, you delay'd ſo long the Declaration?

Quickly

Quickly my Heart determin'd for my *ulma*, anſwer'd *Phenime*; but ſtill my eaſon long oppos'd my Wiſhes. The ore I found myſelf capable of Sincerity in ove, the more I dreaded to engage myſelf: And, without that Paſſion, I ſhould ave exacted more Tenderneſs than I was pable of inſpiring. You alone have given e a Proof, that there are Men yet capable Love: You had won my Heart, but had ot triumph'd over it. Yes, I will own, my *ulma!* the Virtue which to-day I ſacrifice you with ſo much Pleaſure, has long held ut againſt you: It was a Shock I could not ear the Thought of, to be robb'd of that one frail Moment, as well as of the ſweet ertainty of reigning in my Beauty, and of ing belov'd. Oh! *Zulma!* added ſhe, eſſing him to her Arms, how hateful do u make me to myſelf, to have loſt ſo any Moments without giving you ſo many ſt Marks of Tenderneſs! yet I! Can I have en this unrelenting Creature! And have been the cruel Cauſe of his deſponding ears! No—no— They were not ſuch as u have ſhed to-day! O! pardon it in e! I was then more wretched than yourſelf—Yet ſtill, my *Zulma!* I muſt ſtill reoach myſelf for daring once to think, that ery Happineſs was not compriz'd in you,

and

and that in possessing you, I was not possess'd of all. Blessed in your Love, how could I have another Thought! Can you still think me worthy your Esteem?

Your Majesty will easily suggest the Consequence of such a Conversation, continu'd *Amanzei*— And how attentive soever I was, it would be impossible for me to call to mind the Discourse of Lovers of such boundless Passion; who were so quick in their Questions, and so speedy in their Answers; and whose inconnected Ideas, in their Soul's Disorder, must lose greatly of their Force by colder Repetition, and could not be near so agreeable to others, as they were to themselves. I was not less surpriz'd at the Excess of their Passion, than to observe the Expedients they found for carrying it on. They did not part till very late, and scarce had *Zulma* left her, before *Phenime*, whose every Moment was sacred to him, sat down and wrote to him. *Zulma* return'd early the next Day, with more Desire, more tenderly belov'd, to pass the most charming Moments, or at *Phenime*'s Feet, or in her circling Arms. In spite of my Propensity for local Change, I could not resist waiting to see of what Continuance their Loves would be; and this Curiosity detain'd me well nigh a Year, when, finding their Passion so far from diminishing,

minishing, that it seem'd every Day to acquire new Force, and that to the most delicate and most ardent Flame, they added Confidence and Friendship in the same Proportion, I went elsewhere to seek for my Deliverance, or to divert myself with newer Pleasures.

CHAP. VIII.

QUITTING the Palace of *Phenime*, I repair'd to a House, where meeting with such Things only, as from their Meanness are not worth Regard or Description, I stay'd not long. I was several Days without finding, in the different Places my restless Condition, and my Curiosity led me to, any thing that was new, and particular enough to engage my Attention. Here, one fell thro' her Vanity; there, Caprice, Interest, Constitution, and even Indolence itself, were the sole Motives to the Frailties they made me Witness of. I frequently met with that spirituous, transient Emotion, which is honour'd with the Name of Taste;

but no where did I obſerve that Love, that Delicacy, that voluptuous Fondneſs, which ſo lately had been my Admiration, and my Pleaſure.

Tired of the vagrant Life I led, and convinced, that our moſt favourite Deſires are often ſuch as are leaſt pleaſing to us in the End, I began to grow impatient at my Fate, and ardently to wiſh for the happy Moment that was to put a Period to the Puniſhment I was condemn'd to.

What abandon'd Manners! did I uſe to cry— Certainly, *Brama!* the omniſcient *Brama!* has flatter'd me with a vain Hope! He could not think it poſſible, in this licentious Age, when Pleaſure, and a Contempt for eſtabliſh'd Principles govern all in *Agra*, that I ſhould ever find two Perſons ſuch as he requir'd, as the Condition of my new Exiſtence!

Full of theſe mortifying Reflections, I tranſported myſelf into a Houſe, that bore the Aſpect of a very peaceful Manſion, kept by a ſingle Lady of about forty Years of Age. Tho' ſhe was yet handſome enough to entertain the Thoughts of Love without making herſelf ridiculous, ſhe was prudent; ſhunn'd noiſy Pleaſures; ſaw little Company; and ſeem'd leſs to have ſought an agreeable Society, than to converſe with thoſe, who

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by their Age, and the Nature of their Professions, might secure her from Censure: There was not, indeed, a House of less Gayety in *Agra*.

Among the Men that visited her, he, whom she seem'd to see with the most Pleasure, and who quitted her least, was a Person pretty much advanc'd in Years, grave and reserv'd in his Behaviour, more yet by Constitution than by Habit, tho' he was the Head of a College of *Bramins*. He was rigid, and inveterate to Pleasures; and was of opinion, that indulging in the least of them, was capable of debasing the Soul of the wisest of Men. By the Austerity of his Temper, and by the Gloominess of his Aspect, I took him at first for one of those, who are more savage than virtuous; inexorable to others, and indulgent to themselves; and who inveigh with Bitterness in public against the Vices they give themselves a loose to in private — In short, I took all his pretended Sanctity for Grimace, which the Surfeit I had taken to these sort of People on *Fatme*'s Account, did not a little contribute to make me think so. Tho' I was seldom mistaken in my Conjectures of these over-solemn Faces, I found myself deceiv'd with regard to *Mocles* (for so this *Bramin* was call'd) and when I knew him

better, I had Reaſon to alter my Opinion. His Soul was juſt, and his Virtue undiſſembled: All *Agra* look'd on him to be a better Man than he choſe to be thought: No Body doubted but his Averſion to Pleaſure was real, and, however ſtrict in his Principles, he deviated not in the Practice. They had the ſame favourable Opinion of *Almaide*, (that was the Name of the Lady at whoſe Houſe I was.) The ſtrict Friendſhip between her and *Mocles*, however apt the World is to cenſure the Intimacies of Perſons of a different Sex, gave not the leaſt Suſpicions to their Diſadvantage: There was no Body but what reſpected their Union, and look'd on it as founded on their mutual Love of Virtue.

Mocles came every Evening to *Almaide*; and, whether they were in company, or alone, their Actions and their Converſation were alike irreproachable. Their general Topics were on Points of Morality; and *Mocles*, in theſe Diſcuſſions, always took care to diſplay his Learning, and the Rectitude of Soul he profeſs'd. What a good deal diſpleas'd me, was, that Perſons ſo ſuperior to others, and who had ſuch Command over their Paſſions, ſhould not be ſuperior to the Pride they ſeem'd to take in mutually ſetting themſelves off as the Mo-

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dels of their Age: Not ſatisfy'd with a bare Eſteem, they uſed to undertake each other's Panegyric with a fulſome Complaiſance and Vanity, that did not well agree with their rigid Virtue.

How tireſome ſoever this dull Formality was to me, I reſolv'd to ſtay here ſome time; not from any Expectation I had of being diverted, or of finding my Deliverance; for the more I thought *Almaide* and *Mocles* perfect enough to be the Inſtruments to effect it, the leſs I could hope to ſee them yield to Frailty; but being tired of my late Excurſions, diſguſted at the World, and reflecting with Horror how abandon'd I had been to it, Morality was become leſs diſgreeable to me; but, whether from the Novelty of the Thing, or from any Advantage I propos'd to myſelf in my preſent Situation by hearing a little of it, I will not determine.

O ſave me! cry'd the Sultan —— I don't wonder at my growing ſo drowſy all at once —— I ſee what it is you're coming to —— But, to cut the Matter ſhort, and that you may not be tempted to ſhew us your Eloquence, or your Memory, I repeat the Menace I made with ſuch ſage Precaution at the Beginning of your Tale. If I were leſs merciful, I ſhould let you go on —— you

that love to hear yourself talk so much, I should soon have you under the Penalty — But I hate Treachery; and therefore I condescend to tell you once more, that nothing is so prejudicial to my Health as Morality.

Notwithstanding, resum'd *Amanzei*, the consummate Virtue of *Almaide* and *Mocles*, in the Heat of their Morality, they were sometimes a little too particular in their Descriptions of Vice. Their Intentions were doubtless good, but they were not the more prudent for dwelling so minutely on what insensibly conveys Ideas dangerous to the Imagination, and the Passions.

Almaide and *Mocles*, who either felt no such perilous Consequences, or thought themselves superior to them, were yet a little too presumptuous in their Dissertations on the tender Passion; tho' it must be own'd, after having display'd all its Charms in the most lively Colours, they did not fail likewise to set forth all the Shame and Horrors attending it. They agreed too, that true Felicity was only to be found in Virtue; but asserted it very concisely as a Truth too well known to be controverted. They were not quite so laconic in their Enquiries concerning the frail Pleasure: On that dear Topic how they enlarg'd themselves, and dwelt on the most delicate Passages with a

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Confidence, that gave me hope they would ſome Day or other be the Dupe of!

For at leaſt a Month, to ſpeak within compaſs, they entertain'd themſelves every Night with theſe lively Deſcriptions, which I thought ſo little became them: Whatever Subject, in fine, they enter'd upon, they were ſure, before they had done, to fall upon that, which they ought to have avoided. *Mocles*, whoſe Temper grew inſenſibly ſoften'd by theſe Diſcourſes, made his Viſits to *Almaide* ſooner than uſual, took more Pleaſure in them, and left her later. *Almaide*, on her part, expected him with more Impatience; ſaw him with more Satisfaction, and heard him with leſs Interruption. Whenever *Mocles* found her engag'd in Company, he appear'd under a good deal of awkward Perplexity, nor was it leſs viſible in *Almaide*: Or, were they left alone, I could obſerve in their Faces that Joy two Lovers feel to ſee themſelves at liberty to give a looſe to their Tenderneſs, after having been interrupted by ſome long unſeaſonable Viſit. They met with more Eagerneſs; complain'd of their being too much teiz'd with Company, and behav'd to each other with the utmoſt Complaiſance; much in the ſame Phraſeology, but in a different Tone. They liv'd, in ſhort, in a Familia-

rity that could not fail to carry them the greater Lengths, as they began to confound themſelves upon the Article, that was the Source of their Friendſhip, or (as I rather think) what they had not a compleat Knowledge of.

One Day *Mocles* launching into high Encomiums on the Virtue of *Almaide*, For my part, ſaid ſhe, it is not at all ſtrange, that I have preſerv'd my Chaſtity: In a Woman, Prejudice of Education is a great Aid to Virtue, but, in a Man, it deſtroys it. In you, it is a kind of Stupidity not to be gay; in us, it is a Crime to be ſo. In vouchſafing therefore to praiſe a Perſon of my turn of thinking, you certainly deſerve the more of her Eſteem. If I were not to examine your Poſition with all the Strictneſs of Reaſoning requir'd to ſee Things as they really are, anſwers he, with great Gravity, one ſhould be apt to be impos'd on, and imagine that I am, in effect, more worthy of Eſteem, than yourſelf. It is eaſy for a Man to reſiſt Love, while every thing expoſes the Women to it: If they are not prompted by Tenderneſs, they are by Conſtitution. Beſides theſe two Springs, which occaſion ſo many and great Diſorders in the World, they have their Vanity to undo them, which, by being the Source of their Frailty, is not the

the leſs excuſable by being ſo common. But a more terrible Misfortune ſtill to them, added he, ſighing and lifting up his Eyes to Heaven! is the perpetual want of Employment in which they languiſh away their Lives. 'Tis this fatal Indolence, that breeds dangerous Ideas; the Imagination, naturally vicious, adopts, and extends them. The Paſſion having taken birth, ſpreads its Empire over the Heart; or, ſhould it not partake of the Diſorder, theſe pleaſing Viſions of Voluptuouſneſs diſpoſe it for every Weakneſs. When alone, and abandon'd to all the Warmth of her Imagination, ſhe purſues a Chimera her Idleneſs occaſion'd; and, not to be interrupted in the imaginary Enjoyment, diſmiſſes every good Thought, that would make her bluſh at her Illuſions. The leſs real the Object is, that ſeduces her, the more needleſs it is ſhe thinks to reſiſt it: All is huſh — no buſy overlooking Eye — She only is the Witneſs of her Weakneſs — What has ſhe then to fear? But this Heart, ſhe rears-up in tendereſt Thoughts; theſe Paſſions, ſhe thus inures to voluptuous Ideas; will they be always ſatisfy'd with Illuſions only? Suppoſing even that ſhe means not to prejudice her Virtue more effectually, were ſhe to ſee a fond, and eager Lover, ſighing, in Tears and Tranſports at her Feet, perhaps too in

one of the tendereſt Moments within herſelf, could ſhe well hope to find in a Heart thus ſoften'd, thoſe Principles, which alone could make her triumph over ſo dangerous a Minute?

Ah! *Mocles!* cry'd *Almaide*, bluſhing—How hard is the Practice of Virtue!—You, of all the World, anſwer'd he, have the leaſt Reaſon to ſay ſo—with every Charm to pleaſe, and born to taſte of every Pleaſure; you, Madam, have made a willing Sacrifice of all to Virtue, which now is ſacrific'd for the meereſt Trifles—I am far from thinking, reply'd ſhe, with great Modeſty, that I am arriv'd at the Perfection which I ought; but I may truly ſay, I have always kept a narrow watch upon myſelf, and more eſpecially dreaded that *fatal Indolence* you ſpeak of, and thoſe wicked Books, and thoſe prophane Shews, which only ſerve to mollify the Soul. Very true, reſum'd he—And I agree, that it is to the continual Care you take to employ yourſelf, you chiefly owe your Prudence. I find it ſo in myſelf: Nothing ſo much awakens the Paſſions as Idleneſs; and, if it has ſuch Effect upon Man, who is born with leſs Weakneſs, judge how much more it muſt have upon Woman!—I grant, anſwer'd ſhe, we have every thing to combat with—Infi-

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nitely more than we, reply'd he — as I was obſerving to you. Beſides, it is to be conſider'd, that the Women are the Perſons always attack'd, and none, except ſuch as are without Shame, and even without Love, will have the Boldneſs to begin the Attack, nor employ that Artillery againſt the Men, which the Men employ every Day againſt the Women with ſo much Succeſs. Add to all their various Arts, Example . . . . . Nay, interrupted ſhe, in that, I'm certain, we have not the Advantage of you: Example ſhould rather have the greater Force with you, as you are Invaders, by Cuſtom. That is not ſtrictly true with every one, anſwer'd he, ſince there are a great many, who by their Characters cannot indulge this Frenzy of the Soul, commonly call'd the Pleaſure of Love; and that, for inſtance, is my Caſe. If it were not, reply'd ſhe, happily born, ſuperior to your Paſſions . . . . Here, *Mocles* lifted up his Eyes to Heaven, fetching a great Sigh — You ſeem diſturb'd, continu'd *Almaide* — If you, O, *Mocles!* are not ſatisfy'd with yourſelf, who ſhall preſume to be ſo? Can you have known, then, what it is to love? Yes, anſwer'd he, hanging down his Head, and fetching another great Sigh — The Declaration is ſufficiently humbling to me; but 'tis what I owe to

Truth,

Truth, altho' it is as true, I have not yielded to the dire Temptation. In owning to you, that ſometimes I have greatly ſtruggled with myſelf, I know I ſhew a Weakneſs, which, by your Surprize, I ſee you did not think me capable of; but in thus candidly undeceiving you in a Miſtake, which was advantageous to me, I am fearful of encreaſing the good Opinion you are pleas'd to have of me: It is leſs mortifying to be tempted, than it is glorious to reſiſt the Temptation. In making you the Repoſitory of my Weakneſs, I am oblig'd to ſpeak of my Triumph: What I loſe on one ſide, indeed, I ſeem as willing to regain on the other; and I wiſh you may not attribute the Acknowledgment I make, to Pride, which is purely the Effect of my Abhorrence of Falſhood.

Finiſhing this modeſt Diſcourſe, *Moclas* with great Humility, hung down his pious Head. Alas! ſaid *Almaide* to him haſtily— There's no manner of Danger in your telling me — I know you too well —— And ſo you have been ſtrangely tempted, then? well! I'm not ſurpriz'd at it —— In vain do we labour after Perfection! there's no attaining it. What you ſay is but too unhappily exemplify'd, anſwer'd he —— Alas! cry'd ſhe with a great Groan— can you imagine that

I have

I have ſo much Cauſe to boaſt of myſelf, and that I am exempted from a Weakneſs even you reproach yourſelf with! — How! cry'd he to *Almaide* — not you exempted, neither! — I have too much Confidence in you to conceal any thing from you, reſum'd ſhe; and I will own, that I have had ſevere Trials to ſtruggle with. What has a long time ſurpriz'd me, and what, even now, I can't comprehend, is, that this Diſorder, which takes poſſeſſion of the Paſſions, and puts them into ſuch Confuſion, ſhould even be involuntary in us. A hundred times, or more, it has ſeiz'd me in the moſt ſerious Duties; and one would naturally think it ſhould have leſs acceſs to the Soul in thoſe Moments. Sometimes, indeed, I have been happy enough to reſiſt its Aſſaults: At other times, in ſpite of myſelf, they have triumph'd over my weaker Intervals, got the better of my Imagination, and ſubdu'd all my Faculties. That theſe ſhameful Emotions ſhould ravage a Soul, that finds no other Happineſs beyond indulging itſelf in them, is not what ſurprizes me; but I ſhould be glad to know, when a Perſon takes every rigid Method to ſuppreſs them, why then ſhe ſhall be yet ſuſceptible of their Impreſſions?

What is call'd Wiſdom, anſwer'd *Mocles*, conſiſts much leſs in not being tempted, than

than in knowing how to resist the Temptation; and there would be little Merit in being virtuous, if there were no Obstacles to surmount to be so. But, since we are upon this Head, pray, oblige me in a Word — Now you are at an Age, in which the Blood, flowing with less Rapidity thro' the Veins, renders us less susceptible of Desire, are you still subject to those dreadful Moments? Yes, reply'd she; only the Assaults are not near so frequent. Even so it is with me, too, answer'd he, with a deep Sigh.

But, after all, said *Almaide*, blushing, we're guilty of great Folly in talking as we do — This sort of Conversation is not becoming us — I wish, all things consider'd, we have not a great deal to fear from it, answer'd *Moeles*, with a Smile of Vanity — It's quite right, to be distrustful of ourselves; but it would be having, methinks, too ill an Opinion of our Virtue, to fancy ourselves so very susceptible! I grant, the Subject we are upon, necessarily leads us to certain frail Thoughts; but there is a wide Difference in discussing a Point for the sake of Information, and from entering upon it with vicious Views only; and as therefore we are perfectly satisfy'd of each other's Motives, I believe we may safely rely on them for our Tranquility. You must not imagine, that what is seducing to

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the People of the World, will make the ſame Impreſſions on us: They of themſelves are nothing; whereas Perſons of the ſtricteſt Virtue are ſometimes forc'd into ſuch ſort of Subjects, and yet, after the niceſt Diſcuſſion, their Innocence ſhall remain as perfect as before. Every thing is an Object of Corruption, to a corrupted Heart, as things the moſt oppoſite in appearance to Wiſdom, have no Power over thoſe, who look further than for mere Matter of Deluſion. It muſt be ſo, ſince you ſay it, anſwer'd ſhe— and I ſhould think it even a Crime in me to ſcruple, after giving me ſuch ſolid Arguments, that I ought not.

Well, then—ſaid *Mocles* to her— ſhall I tell you a Piece of Curioſity that is ſtrong upon me, and what, I believe, you'll ſcarce be able to gueſs? I am a little confounded, however, at what I'm going to aſk; and yet I ſhould be glad to know, methinks, whether you was ever aſk'd a certain Queſtion in your Life? And whether, in ſhort, to give my Curioſity full ſcope, you never have experienc'd the ſoft Tumult of the Soul, voluntary, or otherwiſe?

Almaide, who was not prepar'd for ſuch a Queſtion, ſeem'd greatly confounded; ſhe colour'd, and continu'd muſing a good while. At laſt, breaking Silence in behalf

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of the Querist, Why yes, said she, awkwardly — since you must know, I will own to you, without Reserve, that, in spite of my Aversion to the Sex, I was well enough pleas'd one Day with a young Rattle, who finding me alone, said abundance of those fine things to me, which Men think their Duty to say to us Women, before we arrive at that happy Age, which entitles us to their Respect only, and are miserable enough to have Forms only to expose us to their Desires. I answer'd him still according to the Maxims I had prescrib'd to myself; but, far from being restrain'd by what I said, that he thought I did it rather to make him exert his Talents, than from any real Desire in me to oppose his Conquest; and had even the Assurance to tell me, he was certain I should love him; but you will easily imagine I presently undeceiv'd the Vanity of the Coxcomb. I don't know what sort of Women it was he usually conversed with, but certainly they had not taught him to behave with Respect; for, without giving me the least Warning, he took me hastily up in his Arms, and flung me backwards like a Brute, on a Sopha —— Spare my Tongue the rest, which would do violence to my Modesty, and might revive dangerous Ideas — let it suffice that you know . . . . . No — inter-

interrupted *Mocles*, haſtily— you muſt tell me all — 'Tis not ſo much, I ſee (yes, I ſee it, and I tremble for you) 'tis not ſo much out of fear of ſtirring up your Paſſion, or offending your Modeſty, that you are ſilent, as thro' ſhame of acknowledging your too great Weakneſs; and yet this Motive, far from being praiſe-worthy, cannot be too much blam'd. Let me ſubjoin too, that, taking it for granted, you are afraid the Recital I exact ſhould throw you into dangerous Emotions, you cannot, even in that caſe, ſuppreſs, or palliate a tittle without a Crime. Is it then of little Conſequence to you to be ignorant of the Power of certain Ideas over you? And will you preſume to rely on your Strength, when you have not made tryal of yourſelf? By thus continually flattering your Soul, will you remain in perpetual Ignorance of its Force? Believe me, *Almaide*, we are never fearful enough of a Danger we are Strangers to; and we oftneſt fall by placing too great Confidence in ourſelves. You cannot then dwell too circumſtantially on your Hiſtory: 'Tis from the Effect each Paſſage will have upon you at preſent, that you will be enabled to diſcover the Progreſs you have made towards Virtue; or, (which is ſtill more eſſential) what yet remains in you to root out, in order to attain

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to that fix'd Averſion to Pleaſure, which alone conſtitutes a virtuous Perſon.

This Doctrine, from the Mouth of *Mocles*, ſurpriz'd me a good deal: I knew his Integrity and his Learning, and I could not immediately conceive the Occaſion of reaſoning in a manner ſo the reverſe of his Principles. What! cry'd I, with Amazement! can this be *Mocles!* the ſage *Mocles*, who is adviſing *Almaide* to dwell on Particulars, that offend Modeſty, and ſtir up unchaſte Ideas in the Mind? Being deſirous to account for the Motives of ſo ſudden a Change in *Mocles*, I beheld him very attentively for ſome time, and obſerving him in a very odd Way, both as to Geſture and Looks, I began to think I might poſſibly find my Deliverance in a Place, where I had leaſt Reaſon to expect it.

While I was indulging myſelf in theſe fond Wiſhes, founded as well on their Virtue, as on the uncommon Confuſion they both began to be in, *Almaide* continu'd her Hiſtory.

CHAP

CHAP. IX.

Wherein you will find an important Question left undecided.

WELL--- I will pay you then a blind Obedience, reply'd *Almaide* to *Mocles*: You have convinc'd me it was Vanity alone that made me silent, and you shall see me punish'd for it, by exposing to you every the most mortifying Circumstance of my Story, without Disguise.

I told you, I think, that this rash Youth flung me backwards on a Sopha; and, before I could recover myself from my Surprize, he threw himself impetuously upon me. Tho' the Excess of my Confusion hinder'd me, in a manner, from expressing my Resentment, he saw it sufficiently in my Eyes; and, for fear of my crying out, found means to prevent it, by stopping my Mouth in the most audacious Manner. I cannot describe the horrid Shock it gave me at first, but, I own, my Indignation was not of long Dura-

Duration: Too powerful Nature instantly convey'd the brutal Kiss to the inmost Recesses of my Heart, when, on a sudden, wild Sensations blended with my Rage, and it exerted itself but faintly. My Senses were all in tumult; a Fire, uncommon, rush'd thro' all my Veins, and, hurry'd on by I know not what strange Pleasure, even amid Reluctance, it took entire Possession of my Soul. All my loud Cries were dwindled into gentle Sighs: Spite of my Rage, and Grief, Resistance now was vain; and, wanting Strength for self-defence, I only could bewail my dreadful Situation.

Dreadful, indeed! cry'd *Modes*: And, so; what follow'd? continu'd he, with Eyes all enflam'd. How shall I tell you! resum'd she: As long as I was able, and could speak, I loaded him with Reproaches, which were, perhaps, the pure Effect of Custom. If I mistake not, too, I treated him with the most indignant Scorn: I say, if I mistake not, for I dare not to affirm it. In proportion, as the wild Disorder increas'd, I felt my Fury and my Strength diminish. At last, a dizzy kind of Confusion seiz'd my every Sense; and yet, I did not, after all, surrender: But, what Resistance could I make! alas! how faint! and yet, how faint soever, it cost me yet some Struggles. I never think

think upon this Circumſtance, O *Mocles!* but with Horror; and, even now, the Confuſion which the Remembrance gives me, is as preſent to me, as if I yet were ſighing in the raſh one's Arms. Ah, *Mocles!* what a dreful Moment for my Virtue! With all the higheſt Notions of the Charms of that dear Innocence, which now was at the Spoiler's Mercy, and dreading, even in my Soul's Diſorder, nothing ſo much as loſing it, how could the Pleaſure be ſuch a Pleaſure to me? With ſuch fierce Fears about me, why did they not inſtantly ſnatch me from the Pleaſure? And why did the Pleaſure ſtill leave in my Heart ſuch Empire o'er my Virtue? I wiſh'd (but with what Difficulty did I wiſh it!) ſome Help might come, and ſave me from impending Danger: I had no ſooner form'd the Wiſh, but a contrary Emotion, acting upon me with Extremity of Violence, and leſs diſpleaſing than the former, made me more vehemently deſire, that nothing might now oppoſe my abſolute Defeat. In blushing at what I felt, I wanted to feel more: Without a Notion of new Pleaſures, I eagerly wiſh'd them, till the impetuous Ardor began to be too painful, as well as too fatiguing to the Senſes.

Sunk, as I was, in every ſoft Idea, I had not yet been able to ſilence an importunate

Monitor

Monitor within my Breast, who, tho' hitherto unsuccessful, was yet reproaching me with all my Weakness, when the still more audacious Youth, observing, I suppose, the Impressions he had made upon me, and, resolving to take advantage of them, carrying his Outrage to the utmost Height. He ..... But how shall I express what I still blush to think of! Having been taken up as much as my Confusion would permit, in defending myself against his fierce, reiterated Kisses, I was not in other respects prepar'd for new Attacks. Spite of my cruel Situation, however, this fresh Insult awaken'd all my Fury; but, ah! too yielding me! it did not last; a sudden Turn redoubled my Disorder; and, whether struggling to break loose, or, at least, to discompose him, all, all contributed to soften me to Ruin. Lost, at the last, in wondrous Transport, and, in nameless Bliss, I could no more, but fell, devoid of Motion, into the Arms of the cruel he, who had offer'd me such gross Indignity.

How do I pity you, and how dread the Consequence, cry'd *Mocles!* You have no Cause; it was not such as you imagine, answer'd *Almaide.* While I was in this Situation, which I had so much the more Reason to fear, as I feared not any thing, my Enemy suspended, on a sudden, his Attempts and

nd all his Fury ceas'd. By what ſtrange Prodigy this was wrought, I never could iſcover, and which, indeed, is ſo ſurpaſing wonderful, as you, perhaps, will ſcarce ive credit to: In the very inſtant I had nothing to oppoſe him, and, when he ſeem'd iſt ready to ſeize upon the lucky Criſis, his Eyes, whoſe Luſtre and Expreſſion I could ot, even now, withſtand, chang'd all at nce; a kind of Languor took the place of ury; he ſeem'd abaſh'd, and taking me his Arms with more Tenderneſs, but leſs iolence than before (juſt Judgment for the Wrong he had done me!) he grew even eaker than I was myſelf. My Confuſion egan now to diſſipate, and I was happy ough to be able to enjoy the Humiliation my Foe. After having indulg'd a while the Pleaſure the Conſideration of that ave me, and render'd my Acknowledgments to *Brama* for the Protection, ſo ſigally he had ſhewn me, I forc'd myſelf from m, and got up. As I grew calmer, and ore capable of Recollection, the more I as ſenſible of my Shame. Oft was I going to upbraid this raſh Undoer, as oft I was evented by the ſecret Confuſion I yet felt thin me; and, after having look'd on him th all the Indignation his Inſolence deerv'd, I abruptly left him to his own Reflections.

flections. To ſay the Truth, I choſe rather to paſs it over in Silence, than enter into Particulars; which would have recall'd my Bluſhes, and which, from the Weakneſs I had juſt been guilty of, made me afraid of truſting to freſh Occaſions.

This, purſu'd ſhe, is the only time I ever found myſelf in a Danger I had always dreaded before I knew it, and which I have only known to make me avoid it with greater Care than ever. I thought myſelf, indeed, ſo much the more oblig'd to ſhun it, as from the Emotions I had felt; I diſcover'd in myſelf a greater Propenſity to Love, than I had imagin'd.

You ſee plainly, from hence, ſaid *Mocles*, how important it is to try one's Soul! and now I think on't, what is the Condition of your's at preſent? Has this Recital made any of thoſe Impreſſions you are fearful of? Why, really, anſwer'd ſhe, bluſhing, I cannot ſay, I'm quite ſo tranquil as I was. So that, reſum'd he, if you were actually to meet with ſuch another raſh Spark, you could not help being in a little Perplexity? For Heaven's ſake! cry'd ſhe, ſay no more about it— An Adventure of that ſort would be the cruelleſt Misfortune could befal me— Moſt certainly, anſwer'd he, in great Agitation—— I ſee it plainly.

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At these Words, he grew extremely pen-ive: From time to time he look'd on *Al-maide* with Eyes, that spoke at once his De-ires, and his Irresolutions. The Acknow-edgment she just had made him of her Frailty, gave him Encouragement; but not knowing how, from his small Experience, o make a proper Advantage of it, he well-igh frustrated all his Wishes. The Me-hod he should take to seduce *Almaide*, was ot the only Thing that engross'd *Mocles*; estrain'd by his Character, persecuted by his Passions, now yielding, now resisting, alter-ately I saw him ready to decline, or ha-ard all.

If *Mocles* had his cruel Conflicts, the Mind f *Almaide* was not more at quiet. The Re-ital she had just been making, lighted up new all that she had dreaded: Her Eyes esum'd a Fire not usual for Modesty to give; er struggling Sighs; her Perplexity; her nguishing Air; all spoke the fierce Dis-rder of her Soul. I was very impatient to e what would be the Event of Emotions in wo Persons so discreet, and which they had imprudently given way to. Doubtless, ey were not aware, whither their too pre-mptuous Virtue was leading them, and at they were verging towards a Frailty, hich, as Persons irreproachable, I was oblig'd

to wish for, in order to fulfil the Condition of my Fate, and the Promises of *Brama*. Their Looks, in fine, grew each Moment less timid than before, and began to speak more plainly their Desires. The Difficulty, I saw, lay here: They were not so much with-held from Weakness, thro' a Dread of falling, as they were put to't how to bring their Fall about. They, both alike, were tempted; both seem'd to have the same soft Wishes, and to be under the same Necessity of disclosing them. To those of more Experience in the World, this Situation would not have been perplexing; but *Almaide* and *Mocles* knew not the Art of aiding one another, and durst neither confide nor hint their mutual Flame, otherwise than by a few imperfect, stolen Glances. Supposing they had even guess'd each other's tender Thoughts, how did they know how far they were deluded? What would have been the Confusion of the first should speak, if in the other's Heart there yet were some Remains of Virtue? and, how was it possible for each to make the Declaration, when each found such powerful Reasons to be silent? Granting *Almaide* was frailer, yet, that *Mocles*, was she not yet oblig'd to wait the Overture from him? Exclusive of the Prudence she had ever made Profession of, Modesty

desty, and the Decency of her Sex, forbad it from *Almaide*; and tho' this Law may not be inviolable to every Woman, yet, being a mere Novice, or but little vers'd in Gallantry, she was afraid of the Contempt, so justly fix'd on such a forward Step. Besides, how did she know how *Mocles* would look upon it? Had she been certain his despising her would not have prevented his Complaisance, she, possibly, might have been as rash as others; but then, again, if he should stop short at the Contempt!

After meditating for some time how they might speak with freedom to each other, without exposing themselves to the shock of a Refusal, *Mocles*, from whom a formal Declaration would have been too derogatory to his Pride and to Religion, had Recourse to Sophistry, as the only Method he could hope Success from; supposing he should thereby be even oblig'd to abate a little of his Ardor, as his Reason was so extremely necessary to this End; or would not be at a Loss for a Salvo for his Honour by some dextrous Turn, in case he should be foil'd in his Attempt. Happy had it been, if he had employ'd half the Art in resisting, as he did in deluding himself, and justifying his Delusion!

Oh! plague! ſaid the Sultan— if he goes awkwardly about the Buſineſs, I muſt ſay, it is not for want of taking due time to conſider of it—— I cannot ſee, ſaid the Sultaneſs, any great Matter for Aſtoniſhment in his having Scruples; could a Perſon in his Circumſtances avoid making ſome Reflections? Ah-—— ſome, indeed, I grant, anſwer'd *Schah-Baham*; and to be preciſe in my Argumentation, there being a neceſſity only for ſome Reflections, is the true Reaſon why he had no occaſion to make ſo many. These People muſt have been under terrible Temptations, not to enter into themſelves in all the time they were about it—— You narrowly eſcap'd making a judicious Remark there, reſum'd the Sultaneſs—— Narrowly eſcap'd! ſaid *Schah-Baham*; may I preſume to aſk the Meaning of that Expreſſion? I will ſay, Madam, you have as pretty a way of talking, and as little reſpectful, as any Perſon I know; and there is not, perhaps, a Sultan in the World, except myſelf, that would bear with it— What I mean, reply'd the Sultaneſs, is, that your Remark is not quite well founded: The tumultuous Ideas, that fill'd *Almaide* and *Mocles*, ſucceeded one another with extreme Velocity; and, if you would vouchſafe to give Attention, you would perceive, that what has taken

ken up *Amanzei* a Quarter of an Hour to tell us, ought not to ſuſpend their Reſolutions a couple of Minutes —— Well, then, reply'd the Sultan, the Relator muſt be an Aſs, to employ ſo much time in telling, what the People he ſpeaks of, thought, with ſo much Velocity —— I ſhould be glad, reſum'd ſhe, to hear as much from your Majeſty—— And, ſuppoſe you did, return'd he ? I've a hundred good Reaſons I can tell you, for believing I ſhould acquit myſelf with Honour ; but I would yet do better than all that ; for where I found any thing mighty difficult to tell, without further ado, I would e'en paſs it over.

The Conflict of Mind, which *Mocles* was under, from his Deſires, or his Struggles to ſuppreſs them, gave him ſo ſerious and penſive a Caſt, that *Almaide* thought proper, at laſt, to aſk the Occaſion of his ſo long Silence ? I fear, added ſhe, your're giving way to darkſome Thoughts ? It is too true, anſwer'd he ; the Cauſe I owe to the Recital you have juſt been giving me —— *Almaide* appearing greatly aſtoniſh'd at what he ſaid, Be not ſurpriz'd at it, continu'd he, nor be yet more ſhock'd at what I'm going to tell you, how extraordinary ſoever it will be to hear it from my Mouth : To be plain, then, I'm much diſturb'd that the raſh Youth,

how little Complaiſance ſoever he ſhew'd you, had not the time to perpetrate his foul Intentions. Ah! *Mocles!* cry'd *Almaide*, why ſay you ſo? Yes, anſwer'd he; becauſe in that Caſe, you would have had it in your Power to remove ſome Doubts, which long have diſtracted me; which you have occaſion'd a return of in all their Force; and which, from our mutual Inexperience, muſt ſubſiſt for ever, ſince you cannot ſatisfy my Queries; and it would be too dangerous for me to ſeek the Solution from any other Perſon than yourſelf. My Curioſity on this Head is of ſuch a ſtrange Nature for a Man of my ſacred Character, that, without knowing me, as you do, they would attribute to me Motives, which would not do me Honour. Moſt certainly, anſwer'd ſhe, you will run no hazard in diſcloſing yourſelf to me — For that very Reaſon, reſum'd he, I could almoſt wiſh you had been more experienc'd; for, having a mutual Confidence in each other, I might depend on your concealing nothing from me. Even, could I queſtion your Friendſhip, and the good Opinion you are pleas'd to have of my Diſcretion, the Frankneſs with which you have confided in me, your moſt ſecret Emotions would intirely convince me in that Particular. Let us underſtand you, however, reply'd

ply'd ſhe: By Dint of Reaſoning, perhaps, I ſhall be able . . . . . Oh, no! interrupted he —— you can only afford me Conjectures, and the Lights I want, are ſuch as require the moſt exact Certainty. But, not to keep you any longer in ſuſpence, I will explain myſelf, and leave it to you to judge, whether it redounds to the Reputation of ſo learned a Perſon as I am, to diſcover ſo total an Ignorance in the Article I mean to diſcuſs. Nor is it leſs your Intereſt than mine to co-operate in this Recherche; ſince it is not poſſible, but a Perſon, virtuous, as you are, muſt be agitated with the ſame Thoughts that I am. How you terrify one! ſaid *Almaide* to him—I conjure you, ſpeak—Well then, ſaid he to her— Suppoſe I am not altogether ſatisfy'd, that there is much Merit in our never having neglected our important Duties —— Ah! Heaven! what is't I hear! cry'd ſhe, pretty much nettled that the Converſation took ſo ſerious a Turn —— Nothing, reſum'd he, but what, I fancy, I can make evident —— For your Part, you have never taſted of the Sweets of Love (for I cannot call what you may think you prov'd in your Adventure with the daring Youth, but a very imperfect Sketch) and, as for me, I ſtudiouſly have ſhunn'd it; but yet, is that ſufficient to make us think ourſelves ſo per-

fect? Perhaps you'll ſay we have had our Deſires, and we have triumph'd over them— Is even this, again, a Victory ſo mighty? Did we well know what it was we wiſh'd? or are we certain that we had Deſires? Believe me, we have been impos'd on by our Pride; and, what we took for moſt violent Deſires, was, doubtleſs, only a very ſlight Temptation. Perhaps, however, we were miſguided rather by our Ignorance: Heaven ſend it! But, if it be true (as much I fear it is) that we have at any time been tempted to magnify our Conqueſts, or even have had a conſcious Thought of having obtain'd any, in what a Maze of Error have we liv'd! While we were flattering ourſelves with being virtuous, even then, perhaps, we were more imperfect than thoſe, whom we preſum'd to cenſure, and by our Vanity could even reckon one Vice more than they.

Oh! what a mortifying Reflection do you make! ſaid *Almaide*—— I have been long perplex'd, alas! with Thoughts, like theſe, reply'd he, with a melancholy Air; and am ſtill the more ſo, as I ſee only one Way to eaſe me of my Doubts, and that, ſimple, as it may ſeem, is not without its Danger. Oh! pray, let us hear it then, entreated ſhe; for, as I am exactly in your Situation of Mind, it concerns

concerns me to know every thing about it. I ought to know you as I do, anſwer'd he, not to be afraid to oblige you.

You and I, for inſtance, believe ourſelves virtuous; but, as I was obſerving juſt now, we know not what it is, in reality, as you will preſently be convinc'd of. In what does Virtue conſiſt! In abſolutely depriving ourſelves of thoſe things, which are moſt pleaſing to our Senſes. And, who can tell the thing, that pleaſes them moſt? He alone, who has enjoy'd every thing. Now, if the Knowledge of Pleaſure can only be known from the Enjoyment, a Perſon that never has taſted it, cannot have a competent Knowledge of it: What can he ſacrifice, then? Why, nothing; a *Chimæra*; for what other Name can be given to thoſe Deſires, which prompt us to a thing we are entirely ignorant of? And if, according to this, the Merit of the Sacrifice conſiſts alone in the Difficulty, pray, what Merit can he lay claim to, who only ſacrifices an Idea? Whereas, after having been devoted to Pleaſure, and had all the Reliſh imaginable for it, then to renounce it! then to ſacrifice one's ſelf! that is, indeed, the only, truly noble Virtue! and what you, nor I, have it not in our Power to boaſt of.

Too well I ſee it, ſaid *Almaide*— we have it not, indeed, to boaſt of—— And yet we

uſed

uſed to flatter our ourſelves we had, anſwer'd *Mocles*, haſtily, who was not willing to give her time for Reflection, for fear ſhe ſhould ſee thro' his Sophiſtry—— Nay, we have preſum'd to believe it too; and from that Moment were we guilty of Pride. How do I rejoice! continu'd he; indeed, I cannot enough commend your good Senſe in perceiving, that unleſs we bring ourſelves to reaſon with Freedom on Vice and Virtue, we can never have an adequate Notion of either. Nor is this the only Miſchief: Without this Liberty, we ſhould be perpetually plagu'd with a Deſire of knowing what we ſhould continue with as great Obſtinacy in the Ignorance of. The Soul being irreſiſtibly agitated by this Curioſity, ſuffers greatly in its Functions: By the contrariety of its Emotions, it ceaſes to reaſon, to compare, to purſue, to diſcuſs, to fathom what it has conceiv'd, at the time it would be able, without this painful Fluctuation of Ideas, to devote itſelf wholly to the Practice of Virtue. If in the Purſuit of Knowledge it went upon a fix'd Principle, it would be much more tranquil; and the more tranquil, the more perfect it would be: It follows, therefore, that we ought to know Vice, whether we would be leſs diſturb'd in the Exerciſe of Virtue, or more aſcertain'd in itſelf.

Tho'

Tho' *Almaide*, in this Demonſtration of the Neceſſity of Pleaſure, was only juſt able to conceive enough of it to free her from Remorſe, this Sophiſtry, nevertheleſs, made her tremble, and ſhe was for ſome Moments quite confounded; but the Deſire ſhe had of being thoroughly acquainted with the Myſteries of Love, or of once more abandoning herſelf to her Emotions, prevail'd over her Terror, and ſhe ſeem'd, in fine, rather ſurpriz'd than frighten'd at what ſhe had heard —— And ſo, you're of opinion, then, aſk'd ſhe, with a trembling Voice, that we ſhould be the perfecter for it? Undoubtedly, reply'd he— Be pleas'd to conſider the Situation we both are in at preſent, and you will own there cannot be a more horrible one —— I am ſadly convinc'd, ſaid ſhe —— It is, indeed, moſt deplorable!

In the firſt place, continu'd he, we are not certain we are virtuous, which is a melancholy State for Perſons that think as we do. Nor is this cruel Uncertainty the only Misfortune attending our Condition: It is but too evident, that there are a thouſand things we believ'd ourſelves exempt from obſerving, infinitely more eſſential, perhaps, than our voluntary Privation of Pleaſure: Conſequently, by the Shadow of a Virtue, which, very probable, is purely chimerical,

we

we have been guilty of a real Crime; or (which, tho' not of the ſame Importance, is yet attended with conſiderable Inconveniencies) we have neglected the doing of good Actions. In fine, ſuppoſing us ſuch as we have hitherto believ'd ourſelves to be, I could relinquiſh the Virtue we have practis'd, without imagining there was any great Merit in poſſeſſing it. Let a Man have his Choice of two Burthens, and he will certainly take the lighteſt.

I underſtand you, ſaid ſhe, ſighing; that is as much as to ſay, that we have done the ſame. What Scruples do you fill one with! continu'd ſhe, caſting down her Eyes —— And how is it poſſible to rid one's ſelf of them, when the very Means that ſhould free me, creates them in greater abundance! This Means, reſum'd he, haſtily, is, at the bottom, leſs to be dreaded, than it ſeems. Let me ſuppoſe (and, would to *Brama*, there was no Foundation for the Suppoſition!) that we are quite weary'd-out with our Uncertainty; that we begin to be ſenſible, at laſt, that it is our Duty to deliver ourſelves from it; that we are reſolv'd to have a Knowledge of Pleaſure, and be, ourſelves, the Judges of its Charms; what Danger would reſult from the Trial? Were we like other Souls, indeed, and could not fly from it,

it, when once we had tasted it, I own there would be some hazard; but, without presuming too much, I think we have no need to be diffident of ourselves, in that respect. That I may conceal nothing from you, if, as I imagine, there is less in this Pleasure, than is generally represented, it will give us no Pain to comply with a thing, which, alluring, or not, is deem'd meritorious to deny ourselves of: If, on the contrary, the Gratification conveys an enchanting Disorder to the Soul, as surprizing as is said, we shall, in that Case, have the greater Joy in denying ourselves of it, as we shall then be certain of its being a consummate Virtue to do so.

This Reasoning, which *Almaide* would, doubtless, have detested, had she been more Mistress of herself, had all the Effect the impious *Bramin* propos'd, over a Soul, which wanted only the Appearance of an Excuse to yield. After having beheld him some time with irresolute Confusion in her Eyes, I am as sensible as you, said she to him, of the absolute necessity of this Trial; but then, with whom shall we with Safety make it?

At these Words, with every softer Languish in her Eye, she inclin'd herself towards *Mocles*, who by this had nestled to her; and now he held her folded in his Arms. Since it is agreed to hazard a Trial, then, reply'd he

he to her, I believe you'll think with me, it cannot be made by other than ourſelves: Here, we may rely with Surety; and, as beyond all Doubt, it is merely with a view of rendering our Enquiries after Virtue the more extenſive, that we are prompted to do what ſeems deſtructive of it; ſo, in like manner, we may be as certain, we ſhall not make a Habit of a Curioſity, that ſprings from ſuch laudable Principles. Which way ſoever, in fine, it turns out, we are certain of reaping Benefit, ſince the Remembrance of our Fall will be a ſure Preſervative againſt Pride.

Tho' *Almaide* return'd no Anſwer, ſhe yet ſeem'd fluctuating; and *Mocles*, who was reſolv'd, at all Events, to make her determine, propos'd, as the finiſhing Stroke to her Deception, that he would make the Trial very gently, and by ſlow Degrees, in order, ſaid he, that they might not proceed further than was neceſſary, provided they found in their firſt Eſſays wherewith to aſcertain their Doubts. On theſe Conditions, ſhe ſurrender'd—— Soon did they bewilder themſelves in ſoft Deſires; and ſtill provoking them by awkward Methods, employ'd with little Grace, and with as little Judgment, they ſo enflam'd their Senſes, they preſently forgot the Capitulation they had juſt been making.

making. Both finding either too much or too little of what they felt, they thought proper to proceed, or were not able to ſtop: And ſo . . . . . you ſtrait became ſomething elſe, I ſuppoſe, interrupted the Sultan? Not ſo, pleaſe your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei*—— I can't comprehend how that can be, reſum'd *Schah-Baham*; and yet, I ſee plainly, the Reaſon is becauſe the thing in itſelf is incomprehenſible; for it is not to be doubted, but they had all the Requiſites that your *Brama* exacted. I was of the ſame Opinion, at firſt, with your unconquerable Majeſty, reply'd *Amanzei*; but, after all, one of the two muſt certainly have impos'd on the other. I ſuppoſe, you were deviliſhly mad at the Diſappointment, reply'd the Sultan! But, pray, tell me— which of the two did you ſuſpect moſt? The Recital of *Almaide*, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, gave me ſtrong Suſpicions of her Frailty; and, notwithſtanding the extreme Ignorance ſhe affected in ſurrendering to *Mocles*, I could not help believing, that ſhe had ſuppreſs'd the very Circumſtance of her Adventure, which was the Occaſion that ſtill detain'd me in my Priſon. Right Woman, i'faith, cry'd the Sultan! To be ſure, your Reflection is juſt— well— I did not take any Notice, but I would have laid my Crown to a Pebble that

ſhe

ſhe had not ſold all— Why; if I had diſcover'd any Vanity that way, there's a ſort of People would have preſently tax'd me with aping the Phiſiognomiſt— ay—ay— take my Word, it was ſhe that prevented your Deliverance.

Probable, as the thing is, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, it is not without its Difficulties: I muſt own, for a Man of the Simplicity I took *Mocles* to be, he did not ſeem to want Experience. Why, this alters the Syſtem a good deal, ſaid the Sultan; for . . . . . ay—ay— I ſee plain— It was he, after all— Come, let me adjuſt the Matter, ſaid the Sultaneſs— It was ſhe; then he, you ſay: Now, without puzzling the Cauſe, why might they not have been both frail? Right, again, reply'd the Sultan: Strictly ſpeaking, it might be ſo; but yet, methinks, there would have been more Humour if it had been one, or the other: I can't tell very well why, indeed; but I ſhould have lik'd it better— But, come— let us ſee— what is it they talk'd of afterwards? — that's the moſt intereſting, now, by far.

Mocles, continu'd *Amanzei*, was the firſt, who recover'd himſelf from his Tranſports. He ſeem'd, at firſt, ſurpriz'd to find himſelf in the Arms of *Almaide*; and Reaſon, by Degrees, reſuming its Empire, Horror ſuc-

ceeded

ceeded his Aſtoniſhment. Scarce could he credit what he now beheld— He could not comprehend it poſſible to be; and hop'd ſome Dream alone preſented him this ſhocking Scene. Too certain, at laſt, of his Miſfortune, ſadly he turn'd his Eyes within himſelf, and recollecting all he had done to ſeduce *Almaide!* How much he had been blinded by his criminal Paſſion; and by what horrid Arts he gradually had deluded her, he fell into the bitterest Lamentations.

Almaide, by this, began to open her Eyes; but, not being quite herſelf, as *Mocles* was, ſhe ſeem'd rather confounded, than afflicted. Whether, in fine, it was the Deſpair ſhe ſaw him in, that made her ſenſible of her Fall, or whether, of herſelf, ſhe was her own Accuſer; Ah! *Mocles*! cry'd ſhe, all in Tears; you have ruin'd me! *Mocles* confeſs'd it; own'd he had ſeduced her; lamented over her; endeavour'd to conſole her; and talk'd to her like a Man truly mortify'd, and who had a juſt Senſe of the Danger of relying too much upon our own Strength. In ſhort, after having ſaid to her all that the deepeſt Sorrow, and the ſincereſt Repentance can inſpire, without daring to look at her, he parted with her, never to ſee her more.

Almaide

Almaide, now left alone, Grief and Confusion did by turns o'erwhelm her. She pass'd the Night in Tears and sad Reflections, and could not even excuse herself for the Reproach she had made to *Mocles*, as she imagin'd there was too much Vanity in it. *Mocles*, the very next Day, shut himself up in the most austere Retreat .... Ay, now, I'm thoroughly convinc'd, interrupted the Sultan—— It could not be he, that's certain—— And the inconsolable *Almaide*, continu'd *Amanzei*, a few Days after, follow'd his Example—— Why I'm as far to seek as ever, then—— it could not be she, neither, now I think on't—— well—— I never met with a more puzling Question in my Life; and let them decide it that can.

CHAP. X.

Where, among other Things, you will find a Way to kill Time.

NOtwithstanding the Fancy I had taken for Morality, I began to be sick of hearing so much of it between *Almaide* and *Mocles*, at the time he thought proper to

to make it ſubſervient to the Purpoſes of Love. Had he deferr'd it a Day longer, I ſhould have taken my Flight with the Perſuaſion, that there were two Women, at leaſt, inſenſible of the ſoft Paſſion in *Agra*; but, luckily, my Patience prevented my running away with ſo injurious a Notion.

After having taken my Leave of *Almaide*, I wander'd for a long time without fixing. I had no Reliſh for auſtere Cenſure, or that Species of Vice I had already been witneſs of, and made it my care therefore to avoid all Houſes of a decent, regular Appearance. Strolling about one of the Suburbs of *Agra*, which was full of polite little Boxes, I determin'd, at laſt, in the Choice of one, that belong'd to a young Lord, who did not live in it, but only went there now and then *incog.*

The next Day after fixing myſelf, towards the Evening, a Lady came whiſking in with great Caution, who, by the Magnificence of her Dreſs, and yet more by the Dignity of her Air, I concluded was a Woman of the firſt Faſhion. My Eyes were dazzled with her Charms: She was brighter than even *Phenime*, with all her Modeſty, and ſuch a ſoft engaging Air, ſoon as I ſaw her, I could not help being warmly inteſted for her. By the Manner of her coming in to the Cabinet where I was, ſhe

ſeem'd

ſeem'd confounded at the Step ſhe was taking: She trembled as ſhe ſpoke to the Slave that conducted her, and, without daring to lift up her Eyes, plac'd herſelf upon me, full of Cogitations, but withal ſo languiſhing, it was not difficult to gueſs the Object of them.

Scarce was ſhe left at Liberty to her Thoughts, before Reflections of a more melancholy caſt took place; and, after ſome few gentle Sighs, the pearly Drops ſtole down her ruby Cheek. Her Grief, however, appear'd to be rather *tender* than *ſad*; and ſhe ſeem'd leſs to *weep at* Misfortune, than *fear it*. Scarce had ſhe dry'd her Tears, when a gay, looſe, handſome, well-made, young Nobleman, ſuperbly dreſt, came capering and ſinging into the Cabinet. His Preſence threw her into the utmoſt Perplexity; a Crimſon Glow ſtrait flew into her Cheek; ſhe turn'd her Eyes away from him; put her Handkerchief to her Face, and did all ſhe could to hide her ſoft Confuſion from him.

For his part he came towards her, with an Air the leaſt tender, but in the moſt gallant Manner poſſible, and throwing himſelf at her Feet, what! my *Zephis* here! ſaid he to her —— Do my Eyes deceive me, or not! Is it my *Zephis* I behold! can it be you! you I adore,

dore, and whom I ſcarce durſt hope to find here! Is it then you, in fine, I preſs thus in my Arms!——Yes, anſwer'd ſhe, with a ſigh,——'Tis I, who ought not to have come here: 'Tis I, who even die with ſhame to ſee myſelf here; and who nevertheleſs you'd not reſiſt coming here. Well!——how dear do you render this Solitude! cry'd he kiſſing her Hand —Ah! how many Pangs, anſwered ſhe, perhaps will it one Day coſt me! the cruel Proofs I give you of my Weakneſs, will become ſtill more dreadful to me, as you may poſſibly loſe the Remembrance of them; and Oh! I wiſh that *Malulbim* may not ſoon forget them! or ſhould he ſometimes caſt away a Thought upon me; it will be, I fear, only to deſpiſe me for my too-eaſy Faith —— Oh Heaven! what is this! reply'd he gaily,—how can you talk so idly! you that are ſo charming! do you know, in *ſimple Truth*, I never lov'd before with half the Tenderneſs I do you? How can you then be ſo unjuſt to doubt me! No, reſum'd ſhe, gravely,—I have not even the Happineſs to doubt: I know it is not in your Power to be conſtant, or faithful, and queſtion even if you know what it is to love; and yet I love you; I have often told you, and here I am come to tell it you again. I'm ſenſible of all my Weakneſs;

I ſee the Conſequences; and yet I muſt ſub-
mit. My Reaſon ſhews me what I have to
fear: My Love makes me deſpiſe the Dan-
ger.

Why really, anſwered he, do you know
that you are wronging me very much; do-
ing me a mortal Injury in thus ſuſpecting my
Tenderneſs? Ah! *Mazulhim*! cry'd ſhe, is
it thus you feel for all I ſacrifice! and thus
you fortify my Heart againſt my Fears! I
love you *Mazulhim*! I wiſh you knew how
much! my Heart is only your's; you know
it is.—Say then you wiſh it may be ever ſo.
If you but knew how much I ſtand in need
only of believing that you love, even out of
Humanity you wou'd tell me ſo.—In you
alone is all my Happineſs center'd: To ſee
to love you, is my only Good; my only
Wiſhes: And is it poſſible then you cannot
think of me, as I can think of you!

Bleſs me! cry'd he—I proteſt to you...
Leave *Mazulhim*, interrupted ſhe, leave to
me the Care of your Juſtification; I ſhall be
a much better Advocate for you, than you
can be for yourſelf, as I am more ſtrongly in-
clin'd to believe you love me, than you are
to perſuade me that you do. I muſt own,
Madam, reſum'd he, with a graver Air, but
not with a more affected Heart, I did not
think myſelf unhappy enough, after all the

Ma

Marks I have endeavour'd to give you of my Tenderneſs for theſe ſix Months, to find you yet ſuch an Infidel. I am ſenſible, the extreme of Paſſion, and ſuch as I have had the Happineſs to inſpire you with, is ever attended with little Diſtruſts; and if they only ſtruck at my Diſquiet, added he, preſſing her in his Arms, I ſhould complain much leſs, and the Pleaſure of finding you ſo delicate, wou'd make me forget how unjuſt you are; but they endanger your Repoſe, Madam! there is my Concern; and if you knew me better, you wou'd have no Difficulty to believe that *that* is infinitely dearer to me than my own.

Finiſhing theſe Words, he would have taken the tendereſt Liberties with *Zephis*; but ſhe repuls'd him with ſo determin'd an Air, he ſaw her Reſiſtance was more than the Usual Efforts of the Sex, which now are only taken for mere matter of Form; and beholding her with Surprize, very well — Madam, ſaid he to her, — Is this the way of proving to me your Tenderneſs? And had I Reaſon to expect ſuch a cold Return? For Heaven's ſake! hear me, *Mazulhim*, anſwer'd ſhe in Tears — I did not come here without knowing what I expos'd myſelf to; nor wou'd you ſee me ſhed ſo many Tears, if I was not determin'd to reſign myſelf wholly to you: I love you; and if I only follow'd the

the Dictates of my Heart, I ſhould not now be from your Arms; but *Mazulhim*, there's time enough for tenderer Moments; and I think our Engagements are not quite ſo ſtrict, but you may be leſs reſerv'd in your Profeſſions. How does it ſtab me every time I think you do not love me! But judge how much more Cauſe I ſhould have to reproach you! and how much more wretched I ſhould be to find it, when my Weakneſs had left you nothing to deſire! Govern'd by the Wiſh to pleaſe, inconſtant by Succeſs, alas! you only court to conquer, do not court to love: How do I know but ſuch may be your Paſſion for me! Examine well your Heart then I conjure you! you are the Diſpoſer of my Fate; and ſure I have not deſerv'd, that you ſhould make it miſerable! If you are not actuated by the moſt perfect Paſſion: In a word, if you do not meet me with a mutual Flame, fear not to ſpeak it: I ſhall not bluſh to be the Price of Love; but I ſhould die of Shame and Grief, to ſee myſelf the Sacrifice of wanton whim.

Theſe Words, and the Tears *Zephis* accompany'd them with, made no Impreſſion on the Heart of *Mazulhim*: They had this Effect however; he thought proper to talk to her in not quite ſo indifferent a ſtrain as he had done at firſt. O! do not thus torment

ure me with your cruel Fears, ſaid he to her! how little do I merit them! how can my *Zephis* think, that I confound her with thoſe contemptible Things, that hitherto have ſeem'd to engroſs me! I own, my gay Manner of Life, gives you juſt Cauſe to doubt; but wou'd you have had me, O my *Zephis!* added to my Folly in paſſing ſome idle Hours with Women, the ſtupidity of loving them? I grant that I have never guarded againſt Love; and to defend myſelf, cou'd I do better than converſe with Women, without Decency, without Morals, who, at the ſame Time they were the moſt alluring in their Perſons, preſerv'd me from the tender Paſſion by their Characters. I have a Habit, you ſay, of Inconſtancy by Succeſs: But can you think ſo meanly of me as to believe I ever cou'd be vain of any, till now, you have vouchſafed to make me ſo: Believe me, not one of all the Conqueſts you imagine are ſo flattering to me, but what in the very Inſtant cover'd me with inward Confuſion! And there is not one, in fine, I do not wiſh from my very Soul not to have obtain'd, ſince they render me leſs worthy of my *Zephis.*

Zephis, at theſe Words, appear'd a good deal comforted, and ſtretch'd her Hand to *Mazulbim*, fixing her lovely Eyes upon him,

with ſuch a melting Softneſs of Expreſſion, as Love alone can give. Yes, *Zephis*, continu'd *Mazulhim*, I love you! how greatly do I love you! what a pleaſing Reflection is it to me, now languiſhing, that in all my moſt furious Tranſports, I did not ſacrifice to Love! how dear it is to know it, and to know it alone thro' you! Without your Charms! without your Virtues! I had ever been a Stranger to the Paſſion, and which ſcarce even you cou'd make me ſenſible of. To you alone I owe the charming Impulſe: For you alone it ſhall be all devoted.

Ah, *Mazulhim*! cry'd ſhe —— how happy ſhall we be, if what you ſay, you think! if it be true you love me, you will always love me! At theſe Words ſhe leant upon *Mazulhim*, and taking him tenderly in her Arms, reclin'd her Head againſt his. A ſwimming Softneſs gliſten'd in her Eyes, and the Tranſports of *Mazulhim* diſſolv'd her very Soul. Ye Gods! what Looks, when he had rais'd them to their Zenith of Confuſion! never had I beheld ſuch but from *Phenime*.

Prepar'd, as ſhe was, however, for rendering *Mazulhim* the happieſt of Lovers, ſhe could not ſee him ſo near his Bliſs, without renewing her Fears, and, perhaps, having ſome ſmall Thoughts about her Virtue.

You

You doubt not but I love you, ſaid ſhe to him, making the ſlendereſt Reſiſtance; and can't you . . . . . Ah, *Zephis!* interrupted he— Can you yet heſitate to prove to me your Tenderneſs!

Zephis ſigh'd, without making any Anſwer; overcome more by her own Love, than ſhe was convinc'd of that of her Lover, ſhe yielded, at laſt, to his Deſires. Too happy *Mazulhim!* What charming Proſpects offer'd to thy View! And how did the Baſhfulneſs of *Zephis* enhance the Value of her Beauties! Accordingly, they did not ſtrike *Mazulhim* a little: All raiſed his Wonderment; he found all in *Zephis*, and ſhe was at once the Object of his Praiſes and his Kiſſes. Tho' I was ſo far from blaming him for his Admiration, that I joined mine to his; yet I could not help thinking, that for a Perſon in his Situation, he dwelt rather too long upon it, as it ſeemed to ſuſpend, at leaſt, if it did not make him quite forget his Deſires.

True it is, the more delicate we are, the more we amuſe ourſelves with the trifling Part. The robuſter Paſſion alone knows thoſe tender Eruptions, which Imagination gives, and which it varies in a ſwift Progreſſion. Yet can we not eternally devote to Pleaſure; and if we ſometimes dwell upon it,

'tis less to terminate Desire than kindle it anew. For some Moments I had a good Opinion enough of *Mazulhim*, to attribute his Humiliation to an Excess of Love; and the Charms of *Zephys* justified me in it. Probably, *Zephis* herself believed the same, and was not undeceived so soon as I was. I could not conceive how the Transports of a Lover, so tender! so eager for his Happiness! shou'd grow the languider, as they found wherewith still to excite them; he was brisk without Fire; profuse in his Admiration, and his fine Speeches; but is Compliment then the best Proof of a Lover's Desires?

How artful soever *Mazulhim* dissembled his Misfortune, *Zephis* at last perceived the little Success of her Charms, at which she seemed, however, neither surpriz'd nor shock'd; and turning her beauteous Eyes upon her Lover, Rise, said she to him with a gentle Smile, I find I'm happier than I thought for.

Mazulhim, who saw the Ridicule, attempted awkwardly to prove to *Zephis*, that he did not merit the injurious Idea she seemed to have of him; and further justifying himself, said he to her in a tone that made me laugh, Why really, my Dear, you vexed one so! Come, answered *Zephis*, I

can

can ſmile at your Perplexity, but your Grief would give me Pain; and it would be too unworthy of me, if you thought I regretted-----Ah! *Zephis!* interrupted *Mazulbim*, how terrible is it to be in the wrong before you! And how difficult to juſtify one ſelf in it! Nay— do not thus afflict yourſelf, anſwered *Zephis* tenderly—I now indeed believe, but from this Moment believe you love me; and you could not have given me a greater Inſtance of your Tenderneſs than by the very thing has given you ſo much Cauſe for Self-reproach.

Good! ſaid the Sultan—that may paſs well enough for a Copy of her Countenance, as the ſaying is; but ſhe was deviliſhly nettled at the bottom I'll anſwer for her. Firſt, becauſe the Thing is mortifying in itſelf, and what in appearance is mortifying to all Women, cannot be pleaſing to one; or at leaſt you muſt allow in that Caſe ſhe would be very whimſical: Beſides, becauſe whereever there is an Impulſe, it is not a Thing ſo eaſily quieted, as it may be eaſily ſaid.

And now we are upon this Subject, I remember one Day— (I was quite a Boy you muſt know) Ay— ſhe was a Woman— I can't ſay how it happened; we were nevertheleſs both— Really, I ſhould never have ſuſpected myſelf; but would you think

it! in the Twinkling of an Eye —— I don't well know how to tell it you tho'; but after all, it was to little Purpose to entertain her with the finest Speeches perhaps ever were penn'd; the more I spoke, the more she wept. I never saw such a Thing before nor since; but I must own indeed, the Scene was enough to soften a Flint. I told her, however, among other Things, that she ought not to take it so to Heart, for that I did not do it on Purpose. . . . . Come, — finish, I pray, your fine Parallel, interrupted the Sultaness. - - - - Why, this is pleasant enough, answered *Schah Baham*, that a Man can't be allowed to tell a Story, and in his own House too! From hence, as I was saying, pursued he, I concluded, as an invariable Maxim, that there is no Woman whatever, to whom such a Thing can give a real Pleasure; consequently, the Mistress of *Mazulhim*, in spite of the fine Things she said . . . 'Tis very probable, would have been full as well pleased if she had had no Occasion to say them, interrupted the Sultaness; but take this along with you however, that what you think so grievous to a Woman, afflicts her less than it is teazing to her — That's right, resumed the Sultan — For Example, a Man would have nothing to do, but - - let me alone for that — *Emir!* proceed.

How

How disconcerted soever *Mazulhim* appeared at his Adventure, he seemed yet more confounded at the Manner in which *Zephis* took it.

If any thing, said he to her, can console me under a Disgrace so shocking, it is to see, that it has no Power over your Heart: What Women shou'd I not be detested by, if they had as much Reason to complain of me! I will own, answer'd *Zephis*, that I should perhaps do the same as them, if I attributed this accident to your Coldness; but if, as you say, and I believe, it proceeds from excess of Love, that stagnates all your Senses, I find in the Adventure a thousand things more flattering to me than all your most successful Transports. Too well do I love you, not to believe that you return my Love: Perhaps too, I may be too vain, added she smiling, in imagining I may have been in part to blame; but let the Motive of my Indulgence be what e'er it will, this I know, that you have my whole Forgiveness. One thing more I must observe, that I should be much more uneasy at the least cause of Suspicion of your Fidelity, than at what you so horribly cry out against. Yes, my *Mazulhim!* be but to me faithful, and may I ever find you such as actually you are! what I shou'd lose

in what you may call Pleasure, wou'd it not be amply made up to me in the certainty of your being constant?

While *Zephis* was speaking, *Mazulhim*, who gladly wou'd have been less oblig'd to her, omitted nothing that might enable him to rise superior to his Misfortune. *Zephis* yielded her sought Assistance with a Complaisance, which in the main he did not much approve of, as it every Moment shew'd him less excusable. Her Complaisance soon grew into Tenderness, which insensibly still augmented: She resisted less, or yielded with better grace: Her Eyes too sparkled with a Fire I had not yet observ'd in them: Only this Instant did she seem to have surrender'd truly: Till now, she had only suffer'd the Ardors of *Mazulhim*; now she partook them all. The Reluctance inseperable from the yielding Moment, which so many Women act, and so few feel, was now no more: *Zephis* could hear herself prais'd by *Mazulhim* without a Flutter, and even seem'd to wish for fresh Encomiums: She blush'd, but it was no longer Bashfulness that made her blush: No longer did she turn away her Eyes from Objects, that seem'd at first offensive to them; and the Commiseration that *Mazulhim* inspir'd her with was in fine boundless; nevertheless ----- Never-

Nevertheleſs . . . . . interrupted the Sultan — I take you — there's an impatient little Gentleman for you! well—I know not any thing for the long run ſo inſupportable as this Procedure of *Mazulhim*, and I will take upon me to ſay, that *Zephis* loſt all Patience with it. And I, ſaid the Sultaneſs, take upon me to aſſert the contrary: To be angry at ſuch a Misfortune is to incur it — O yes! reſum'd the Sultan — as if a Woman was capable of making ſuch a nice Diſtinction! this however is certain, I know, that if I was in a parallel Caſe, I ſhou'd be dev'liſh angry, and ſhou'd not think my ſelf a jot the more unreaſonable for all that I ſhould not —— well, but let us hear what *Zephis* ſays to the Matter; for in this, as I ſee in all other Things, every one has his Fancy.

How indulgent ſoever ſhe was, reſum'd *Amanzei*, the Obſtinacy of her Lover's Misfortune began to make her uneaſy: Whether having done more for him than the firſt time, ſhe might think ſhe deſerv'd it leſs; or whether being now in more favourable Diſpoſitions, ſhe found her Reaſon leſs capable of ſupporting it.

Mazulhim, leſs ſenſible of his Misfortune than *Zephis*, or perhaps accuſtom'd to put a good face on ſuch Accidents, and not having the

the deference for *Zephis* he ought, attempted what with more Policy, or more Politeness, he would not have attempted: And she seem'd displeas'd at the offer less for the Presumption of it, than for the Indignity it was to her Charms. In spite of her Confusion, she gave him a malicious Smile, as much as to say, she was not a Person to whom such Temerity would be agreeable; but being certain that she should soon see him punish'd for it, she acquiesc'd in his ridiculous Attempts with an Intrepidity, that every Woman is fond enough of shewing in such Cases, but which is not always attended with Success. Tho' *Mazulhim* was less to be pity'd now than he had been, he was not so recover'd as to be congratulated upon it; and with all his Efforts, *Zephis* had little Cause to be afraid of them.

By the wild Confusion of *Mazulhim*, I had Reason to believe, that if there was no Remedy for one part of what had happen'd to him, thro' the goodness of such Women as *Zephis*, he was not destitute of all Resource in his Misfortunes. I would not designedly, however, give Offence to any in what I say: But who knows, after all, but the Men are oftner to blame than they are?

Be

Be that as it will, *Mazulhim* teſtify'd ſo ſimple a Surprize, and threw the Odium on other Women, ſo entirely to the Honour of *Zephis*, that ſhe cou'd not forbear laughing. If you had conſulted me about it, ſaid ſhe to him, I cou'd have told you how it wou'd be, tho' perhaps you wou'd not have believ'd me. I ſhould certainly then have been in the wrong, anſwered he; but after 10 Years of ſucceſsful Experience cou'd I well expect this? And had I not Reaſon to believe that yet poſſible, which with you alone I vainly have attempted? Ah, *Zephis!* added he— do I then find in that which ought to accompliſh all my Wiſhes only freſh Cauſe to curſe my cruel Fate? I'm very ſenſible, anſwer'd ſhe ſmiling, how wretched you muſt be, and be aſſur'd I feel the deepeſt Pity for you! Ah, *Zephis!* reſum'd he, with a more ſolid Air of Tranſport, than what I had obſerv'd in him, nothing can equal my Tenderneſs, but your Charms! each Moment augments my Ardor, and my Deſpair; and Oh! I feel..... For Heaven's ſake! *Mazulhim*, do not thus diſcompoſe yourſelf! what Happineſs is it after all that you regret ſo much the loſs of! none — If you truly love me, you are not to be pity'd. One kind look of mine ought to make you happier than all the

Pleaſure

Pleasure which you vainly wish for, even tho' you found it in another Object. I'm quite confounded, charm'd with your Generosity, said he; but while you increase my Love, you aggravate my Grief.

Come let us wave this Topick, said *Zephis* rising from her Seat——What! cry'd he, will you then quit me so soon! Oh! do not abandon me, *Zephis*, to my present Horror! No *Mazulhim*, reply'd she, I promis'd to devote this Day to you; and may it not seem longer to you than it does to me! but let us leave this Place to taste the Sweets of this delightful Evening, and dissipate your melancholy Thoughts from Objects that disturb them. Perhaps, *Mazulhim*, the more we are bent on Pleasure, we enjoy it less: Let us try then, if by giving less Attention, we shall not be in better Dispositions for it.

The generous *Zephis*, at these Words, left the Cabinet, conducted by *Mazulhim* in the most obsequious Manner.

What is not a little singular is, that notwithstanding *Mazulhim* acquitted himself so ill in his Assignations, he was the young Fellow of *Agra* the most admir'd: Scarce was there a Woman, that had not had, or not wish to have him for a Lover. Gay, handsome, sprightly, ever disappointing, still never

never without Objects to diſappoint; all the Women knew it, and yet they all were ſtudious of engaging him: In ſhort, his Reputation was aſtoniſhing! They thought him ..... what did they not think him! and after all, what was he? How much was he not indebted to the Diſcretion of the Women, whom he ſtill treated every way ſo ill!

After they had walk'd ſome time in the Garden, they return'd. I quickly fix'd my Eyes on *Mazulhim*, expecting to find a gayer Alteration in his Looks; but by the flatneſs of his Air, I fancy'd there was none; nor was I at all miſtaken. *Zephis* indeed came, and threw herſelf upon me with Negligence enough, and *Mazulhim* ſat at her Feet upon the Floor. Having little to ſay, and by the help of all his Fancy incapable of finding out Amuſement for her, he fell into a ſenſeleſs Agitation, looking at her however in a very piteous Manner. Aſham'd at laſt at the part he was acting to the beautifulleſt Woman in *Agra*; confounded at his Misfortune, and deſirous of retrieving it, yet trembling to expoſe himſelf to freſh Affronts, he was for ſome Moments without knowing what to reſolve on. He was apprehenſive beſides, leſt his Silence and his Coldneſs ſhould be attributed by *Zephis* rather to his Indif-

Indifference than to his Regrets and Fears. With this, he ſtarted up; ſnatch'd her in his Arms, and kiſſing her with ſo ſudden a Rapture, he ſeem'd determin'd at one bold Puſh to force himſelf from the Lethargy he was plung'd in. On this Surprize upon her, *Zephis* ſeem'd to deliberate within her ſelf, whether ſhe ſhould condeſcend to the new Attempts of *Mazulhim*; and if ſhe was prompted by her great Compaſſion to accord him all, ſhe cou'd not help reflecting at the ſame time with Grief, that ſhe never was ſo cruel to him, as when ſhe refus'd him nothing. Is he deſirous, ſaid ſhe, of being bleſt? or little enough acquainted with me to think he ſhou'd offend me if he did not endeavour to become ſo? And is it *Love* or *Vanity*, that renews in him theſe ſudden ſtarts of Tenderneſs?

While ſhe was taken up with theſe Thoughts, *Mazulhim*, either impatient at his troubleſome Situation, or deſirous of preventing *Zephis* from falling into the ſame, employ'd all the leſſer Circumſtances of Love, he ſo excell'd in; which are ſo agreeable before and after more ſerious Affairs, but were never deſign'd to ſupply the Place of them. *Zephis* at firſt refus'd to liſten to him; but finding, by the unuſual Eagerneſs of *Mazulhim*, that he intreated of her

more

more Complaisance than she had had yet occasion to shew him; out of the abundance of her Generosity, she consented, shrugging up her Shoulders, however, at what he had such a high Opinion of, and, to do her Justice, what she had much less Expectation of than he.

The Disregard, and even the Uneasiness she shew'd for some time, far from discouraging *Mazulhim*, quicken'd his Addresses, and being, as I observ'd, the greatest Proficient of his Time in the lesser Circumstances of Love, he forc'd her, as it were, to yield him more Attention: From the attentive, he drew her on to the interesting Part: The little reality of what he offer'd her, insensibly disappear'd: Even she herself assisted in the Illusion he threw her into; and knew, in fine, what Pleasures the Imagination is productive of! and without it, how much Nature would be limited!

As a Completion of Happiness, what *Mazulhim*, perhaps, had less regarded as a Resource for himself, than as a sort of Attonement to *Zephis*, was the Thing that made Impressions on him stronger than he hop'd for. The Charms of *Zephis* becoming now more touching, gave him an Emotion he had vainly wish'd till then; and having

ving loſt all memory of his Woes, and being too powerful to ſuccumb, in the ſoft Diſorder that now began to diffuſe itſelf thro' all the Senſes, he at laſt obtain'd a glorious Victory over the dire Obſtacles, that had ſo long and cruelly oppos'd him.

That's ſomething like, now, ſaid the Sultan—— I comprehend you— *Better late, than never*——. That's as much as to ſay, he . . . . You will not, ſure, give us an Explanation, interrupted the Sultaneſs! Do you then think that *Amanzei* has had the Complaiſance to leave any thing to be ſupply'd by our Imagination? I can ſay nothing as to that, reſum'd the Sultan—— neither have I any Buſineſs with it——But, in ſhort, the Thing is, as you know as well as I, this ſame *Mazulbim* is a little ſubject to Accidents, and, in my ſimple Opinion, we ſhould inform ourſelves . . . . becauſe, by chance, it might . . . . . But, what of *Mazulbim*, after all?

He was happy, pleaſe your Majeſty; but he knew better how to create, than repair Damages; and I queſtion, had he had to do with a leſs generous Perſon than *Zephis*, whether for ſo little he would have obtain'd his Pardon. Having more Vanity than Inclination, he ſeem'd leſs ſenſible of the

Hap-

Happineſs of poſſeſſing *Zephis*, than of the Pleaſure of being able to ſee her with leſs Confuſion. They enter'd into a tender Converſation, in which *Zephis* blended all the Soul, and *Mazulhim* nothing but an empty Jargon.

A little after, they ſerv'd a Supper up, in which the Owner had exerted all his Elegance and Taſte. *Zephis*, more and more fir'd with her Lover's Preſence, ſaid a thouſand things to him ſo delicate, I knew not which to admire moſt, her Wit, or her Tenderneſs. Tho' he was dazled amidſt ſuch a Profuſion of Charms, they had leſs Effect on him, than me; and his Pride ſeem'd to be more elated with the Conqueſt of *Zephis*, than his Heart was touch'd with that lively, delicate Paſſion, ſhe expreſs'd for him, and which, in ſpite of her Fears for his Inconſtancy, ſhe was wholly taken-up with.

If the Poſſeſſion of *Zephis* did not inſpire *Mazulhim* with all the Love it ought, it gave him, at leaſt, a gayer Turn, and his Heart, tho' Proof againſt the Paſſion, was nevertheleſs languiſhing: The Virtues of *Zephis*, which the Ingrate prais'd, without knowing them, and, perhaps, without believing her poſſeſs'd of them, far from engaging

gaging him to her, ſeem'd rather to eſtrange him from the Conſtraint they laid him under. I ſaw not in *Mazulhim* that true Tenderneſs of Soul, ſhe felt for him, tho' ſhe began to give him freſh Deſires. He beheld her with Tranſport; ſigh'd; recall'd with Rapture the Bleſſing he had juſt enjoy'd; and ſeem'd to eagerly wiſh that they had ended Supper. He even ſignify'd as much to her; but whether, notwithſtanding, ſhe trifled away the Time with any Purpoſe, or had not as good an Opinion as he of the After-ſupper, ſhe ſhew'd a good deal leſs Impatience. She could not, however, forbear her Fondneſs of him— They preſs'd each other—— In fine . . . . . Oh! *Mazulhim!* how happy would'ſt thou have been, had'ſt thou known how to love like her!

A little after, *Zephis* went out, and *Mazulhim* follow'd, making her the ſolemneſt Proteſtations of eternal Love and Gratitude, which I believ'd ſo much the leſs ſincere, as ſhe deſerv'd them beſt. *Zephis* was too worthy to engage his Conſtancy: She was open, without Diſguiſe, without Levity: *Mazulhim* was her firſt Affair, and what would have been the Happineſs of any other, was to his corrupted Heart, a Union, which afforded him neither Pleaſure nor

Amuſe-

Amuſement. He was a Perſon only fit for thoſe Women, who, incapable of Paſſion, and devoid of Shame, have a thouſand Adventures, without having one Lover; and who, from the Indecency of their Conduct, may be rather ſaid to be fond of the *Diſhonour*, than of the *Pleaſure*. It was not, indeed, ſurprizing, that ſo empty a Coxcomb as *Mazulhim* was, ſhould be lik'd by Women of this Stamp; nor that he again ſhould look on them as the moſt engaging Creatures in the World.

But how came it, *Amanzei*, aſk'd the Sultaneſs, that ſuch a Trifler as *Mazulhim* ſhould be capable of making Impreſſions on a Perſon of the Worth you deſcribe *Zephis* of? If your Majeſty is pleas'd to recollect the Character I gave of *Mazulhim*, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, you will be the leſs ſurpriz'd at his becoming agreeable to *Zephis*: He was poſſeſs'd of ſome pleaſing Qualities, and had the Knack of mimicking ſome ſuperior Virtues. Beſides, Madam, *Zephis* is not the firſt Woman of Senſe, that has had the Misfortune to place her Affections on a Fop, as your Majeſty muſt be ſenſible by the abundant Inſtances that happen every Day. Without all Doubt, ſaid the Sultan— He is very much in the right— for Example, we have Inſtances of it every Day—

for

for the reſt, pray don't go now and aſk me why? for, to be plain, I can't tell you — Neither do I aſk you, reſum'd the Sultaneſs: Theſe are Things, that, with all your Wit, I think, in ſimple Truth, do not come within the Compaſs of your Knowledge.

That a Woman of Senſe, continued the Sultaneſs, ſhould be captivated with a Parity of Love and Conſtancy, and being aſſured of the Heart and Probity of the Man that loves her (that is, if there be any ſuch thing as certainty in that Caſe) ſhe yields herſelf up to him at laſt, is not what ſurprizes me; but to be capable of a Weakneſs for a *Mazulhim!* that is, I own, beyond my Comprehenſion! Love, anſwered *Amanzei*, would not be what it is, if.... If, if, interrupted the Sultan—What are you going to be witty now for an Hour together all about nothing? And have not I abſolutely forbid you entering into idle Diſſertations? What is it to you, I'd fain know, whether this ſame *Zephis* loves *Mazulhim?* Or that one is a Scold, and the other a ſilly Coxcomb? What of that? She loves him as he is—But you want to have a wherefore? Why did not you aſk the Queſtion of *Amanzei*, while he was a Woman? Do you think he can remember any thing of the Matter at this Diſtance of Time? Upon the whole, you

are

are always ſo interrupting the Tales that are told me with your Niceties; there is no hearing the end of them; and that is what I think you uſe me very ill in——Come—— *Emir*— Where was it you left off? What became of this *Zepis*, who is ſo very reaſonable, I am quite ſick of her? Prithee, what was the end of all this?

Such as could not otherwiſe be expected, reſumed *Amanzei*: *Mazulhim*, not to be quite bare-faced in his Falſehood, preſerved Decency enough towards *Zephis* to deceive her, with all the Privacy in his Power; but either not being artful enough, or his Infidelities becoming too frequent, and too glaring to be concealed from her any longer; however that was, ſhe at laſt complained to him, but with all the Delicacy and Tenderneſs of Love, ſhe having all the Blindneſs, he eaſily found Means to calm her. He went on with his Perfidies, and ſhe renewed her Reproaches; at laſt, he grew more impatient, and regardleſs of her Love and Tears, abſolutely broke with her, leaving her all covered with Confuſion for having *loved him*, and overwhelmed with Grief for having *him*.

By my Faith! ſaid the Sultan, he did very well to quit her, and the Reaſon is plain; becauſe I ſhould have done the very ſame thing

thing myſelf. I know well enough ſhe was exceeding pretty, and had a deal of Merit, and all that; but with all this Merit of hers, I that expect to be diverted, I ſay, I ſhould have grown weary of her as well as he: Not however that I am a *Mazulhim*: I defy the World to ſay it of me; but methinks there is ſomething whimſical in the quitting of Women, if it were only to hear them talk about it.

CHAP. XI.

Contains a Receipt againſt Enchantments.

THREE Days after my ſeeing *Zephis* for the firſt Time, *Mazulhim* returned alone. Scarce had he Time to give ſome neceſſary Orders, before a ſprightly ratling Lady, with a faſhionable Indecency in her Air, came into the Cabinet to him. At a Diſtance ſhe was ſtriking enough, but on a nearer View very indifferent; and but for her ridiculous Looks and Geſtures and the prodigious Vivacity ſhe affected one would not even have taken notice of her

her. And, indeed, it was the only thing that made *Mazulhim* desirous to have her.

Hah! cry'd *Mazulhim* on seeing her, is it you! and do you know now, that you are all divine for coming so soon!

This Beauty, who, in spite of her childish Airs, was at least thirty Years of Age, advanced towards *Mazulhim* with a graceful Negligence, in which consisted her chief Merit, and without answering, or almost regarding him; well, said she, your little Retreat deserves more than you said of it; for I must own I think it delightful! furnished with such an Elegance of Luxury! it's downright celestial! — Ay,— is there any thing like it in the Suburbs, answered he? --- Would not one really think by this Question, reply'd she, that I was acquainted with a great many? whereas, I only say, added she, this Cabinet is charming, and nothing can exceed the Gallantry of it! And I am not less charmed, said he, that it has the Honour of your Approbation and your Presence.—O! as to my coming, reply'd she, perhaps I have not been as scrupulous as I ought; it is not tho' that I don't know how to be as difficult in an Affair, and do it with as much Decency as another; but —— you don't care for the trouble, interrupted he — and that's no bad

bad Reason let me tell you—Well; suppose it true, resumed she? it proves exactly that I'm above Deceit: When you told me yesterday, for Example, how much you loved me, and made me the Proposal of coming here. Why.... I can assure you I was very much tempted to say no; but the Frankness of my Character would not permit me; I am naturally open and undisguised; you pleas'd me, and here I am without further Ceremony—Don't you now think the worse of me for it— Who I! answered he, shrugging up his Shoulders—that's very pleasant—If it were possible, I have a Million of Times the better Opinion of you for it— Well— how engaging you are, resumed she; but pray tell me— have you been long here? Just long enough, returned he, to be here before you— I never was so confounded in my Life— but I really was afraid you were come first. That would have been very fine truly, said she; but I would have taken care to be even with you—Those Things, you know, Madam, answered he, are not done with Design, and may happen to the most punctual— Yes— resumed she— I know it mighty well, but I should not have lik'd it for all that— Well, but I must tell you News— *Zobeide* has this very Instant quitted *Areb-chan*— I

that all the Harm ſhe has done him, demanded he? And *Sophie*, continued ſhe, ha-juſt taken *Dara!* Taken only him, demanded he again?

While ſhe was ſpeaking, *Mazulhim*, who knew her too well to pay her even a little Deference, took the greateſt Liberties with her. For her Part, ſhe ſeemed as eaſy about the Matter as he, throwing her Eyes in wild Diſorder round the Cabinet; then looking on her Watch, Come -- come — don't be fooliſh, *Mazulhim*, cry'd ſhe to him ------ What! are we to be alone the whole Day? Doubtleſs, anſwered he --- What a Queſtion! O Lud! I did not expect that! Nay-- for Heaven's ſake, deſiſt! added ſhe, not much caring he ſhou'd or ſhou'd not, (and he too car'd as little as ſhe.) You really are guilty of ſuch Follies as no body ſure! And why, pray, ſhou'd we be alone? I thought, anſwered *Mazulhim* coldly, that our Converſation was to be no Hindrance to our Amuſement, at leaſt, according to the Stipulation between us. Stipulation! cry'd ſhe --- O frightful! where did you gather that, pray? I vow, I did not mention a Syllable about it -- But after all; its equal to me; thank Heaven! I know how to keep you within Bounds -- Nay --- hold -- good Sir -- you have ſuch ſtrange Ways, methinks! Not ſtranger

than other People, I hope: Together as we are, ought any thing to be called extravagant? Ah, *Zulica*, cry'd he —— you that have Taste, tell me what you think of that Cieling? I was just considering it, added she, in my Mind, it's over-charged with Gilding; though I must own it's very beautiful, added she, sitting down on his Knee, but not in all Appearance with a View of being incommodious to him.

Now I think on't, after all, resumed she, I must be very weak to believe, that you will be faithful to me, who never yet have been constant to any body. Talk not of that, reply'd he, fully employed, and Thanks to the Goodness of *Zulica*, very commodiously; you would not be a little perplexed, I fancy now, if I should prove constanter than you expect me to be —— And you will plague one then? said she, not in the least opposing, or endeavouring to get from him. As for Constancy, continued she, with as much Indifference as if *Mazulhim* had discontinued; I will venture to say no body has it more in their Nature than myself. Constancy, answered he, is grown so very common now-a-days, it ceases to be a Virtue; and the Person possessed of it has no great Reason to be vain upon't; but after all, however you may pique yourself, if

if I mistake not, you have changed in your Time. Not so much of that — pray don't fancy so — I only say, and you know it very well, answered he, that I can reckon up some of your Lovers, if not all. Well! and what of that? said she. You may know too, that I might have had more if I had thought fit —— But let us have done with this Stuff—— How you torment one! —— Much less than I ought.— More than I care for, I assure you, reply'd she ——How! said he— don't you love me then? Come —— let us have no Whimsies, I beseech you —— I thought we had understood one another: Oh, but.... Yes, answered she, but —— as I live, *Mazulhim!* you make me downright angry — a mere Joke, return'd he coldly — That's impossible.

With this, he laid her gently down upon me —. Well—I protest *Mazulhim*, said she to him, decently settling herself tho' — I shall grow quite outrageous at you — and take notice,—I vow —

In spite of the terrible Menaces of *Zulica*, *Mazulhim* seemed resolved to exasperate her the more; but as he had got an ill Habit of waiting for himself, and she had that of waiting for no body; she was enraged at him beyond Expression: In spite of her Anger, however, she was willing to attend a little,

and her Vanity got the better of her Judgment. Of all the Circumſtances of her Love (and certainly they were not a few) this was the ſingle mortifying one, that had ever failed her of the only Proof ſhe look'd-on of her intrinſic Worth: Beſides, *Mazulhim*, tho' ſo worthy of her Eſteem, was, if you believe common Fame, capable of Wonders! If ſhe had nothing to reproach herſelf with (as it was ſelf-evident ſhe had not) it might be aſked, How *Mazulhim* ſhould be guilty of ſo ſingular a Miſtake to her of all Women, who had never been ſo to any other? She had been told by every body ſhe was a charming Creature; and *Mazulhim* had too gallant a Reputation not to deſerve her ſome way or other; therefore what occaſioned in her theſe Reflections, not being natural, ſhe thought it could not laſt.

With theſe, and a good many comfortable *Hear-ſays*, *Zulica* armed herſelf with a compulſive Patience, and ſtifled her Indignation as well as ſhe was able. *Mazulhim* entertained her with all the Turns in the Power of Gallantry, on Beauties that ſeemed to effect him but little. Sure, ſaid he, all the Magicians of *India* have conſpired to render me thus! But, continued he, what can their Charms againſt your's, my *Zulica*! they

may

may have weakened their Influence, but they ſhall not triumph over them.

To all this, *Zulica*, more angry than *Mazulhim* was diſconcerted, anſwered only with a malicious Smile; but yet did not give it all the Expreſſion ſhe would have done, for fear of depreſſing him. It ſeems then, demanded ſhe, with an Air of Raillery, that you are not upon good Terms with the Magicians? I would adviſe you by all means to make it up with them: People capable of playing you ſuch Pranks are dangerous Enemies! They would be much leſs ſo, anſwered he, if once you took it thoroughly into your Head to defeat them; nay, and I don't doubt, in ſpite of their ill-will, had my Paſſion been leſs violent, but I ſhould have prov'd myſelf —— O lack! that's a thing I can give but little Credit to, interrupted *Zulica*, who having calculated within herſelf the Time he ought to remain enchanted, began to think ſhe had given him ſufficient Reſpite. I know very well, reſumed he, that if you judge of me with rigour, you cannot be pleaſed; but the leſs you are ſo, the more you ought to endeavour to put an end to my Misfortune. I'm afraid, that it is not quite ſo proper, reply'd he —— And I thought you was not quite

ſo nice, reſumed he rallying—I was in hopes —— I muſt own, interrupted ſhe, you take an excellent Time to be witty — well— you are in the right —— This is an Adventure in which you ſhew yourſelf to Advantage. Still, *Zulica!* on your Pleaſantry, reſumed he; and will you never take any other Method but what is hurtful to me, and perpetuates my Humiliation? I vow, ſaid ſhe, that is the leaſt of my Care — But, demanded he, if you care ſo little about it, why are you ſo angry? That is a Queſtion, permit me to ſay, Sir, which does not deſerve an Anſwer.

At theſe Words ſhe ſtarted up, in ſpite of the Efforts he made to hold her: Let me alone, ſaid ſhe very peeviſhly, I'll neither ſee you, nor hear you. Mighty well! cry'd he, — I certainly have ſeen as unfortunate Women as your Ladyſhip, but never any ſo much out of Humour.

This Exclamation of *Mazulhim* did not make *Zulica* better temper'd. Mortified at the Accident which had happened, and enraged at the Air of Indifference with which *Mazulhim* expreſſed himſelf, ſhe vented her Fury on a large China Jar that was juſt by her, which ſhe broke in a thouſand Pieces. Your moſt obedient, ſaid *Mazulhim* ſmil-

ing-

ing—I'm glad, Madam, you can divert yourself any way — I can assure you, however, you would not have any thing here to break, if all the Ladies I may have disobliged, had taken the same Methods of Vengeance.— But pray continue, Madam, added he, lolling upon me — I would by no means have you restrain yourself.

That's a Woman now exactly after my own Heart, said *Schah-Baham!* She has something of a Soul in her, and is not like your *Zephis* there, to whom all was indifferent, and who besides was the stupidest Prude I ever met with. I find myself extravagantly interested for her; and do you mind *Amanzei*, I recommend her to you; prithee, don't let her be always in such Vexation — I will favour her, Sir, answered *Amanzei*, as much as the Respect I owe to Truth will permit me.

After *Mazulhim* had done speaking, he seem'd bury'd in a profound Silence: *Zulica*, who had plac'd herself in a Corner some Distance from him, bore the contemptible Indifference he shew'd her with great Spirit; and to return it, fell a singing: If I mistake not, said he to her, when she had done, the Air you have been favouring me with, is in such an Opera? To which she remain'd silent — Well— continu'd he— you have a

very pretty Voice, of ſmall Compaſs, indeed, but very ſwelling, and the Tone reaches the Heart. Happy is it that it pleaſes you, anſwer'd ſhe, without looking at him—— You may not, perhaps, believe me, return'd he; but, I aſſure you, that you might be prais'd by very few People as good Judges as myſelf. Another Beauty too in you I muſt not omit, if I may be thought worthy to ſpeak my Opinion: It is that charming Manner of Expreſſion, which anticipates Expectation by its Vivacity, and its Juſtneſs; and then your Eyes add ſo many irreſiſtible Graces, it is impoſſible to hear you, without feeling one's ſelf touch'd to the very Soul—— will you anſwer me again; *Happy is it that it pleaſes me?*

No, anſwer'd ſhe, in a ſofter Tone, I cannot be angry at your finding any thing agreeable in me; and the more I know you a Connoiſſeur, the more Weight your Encomiums ought to have with me. That is the very Reaſon, ſaid he, that I am ſo deſirous of deſerving your's—— O, doubtleſs! ſaid ſhe—— You are not, ſure, going to ſay, anſwer'd he, that you are not a Judge of Things? And, as the Height of Injuſtice, can you really imagine it a Thing indifferent

rent to me whether you think well or ill of me? Will you add this Injury to all you have already offer'd me? And, is it poſſible, *Zulica*, that what ought to increaſe your Tenderneſs, ſhould only ſerve to make you hate me?

And, is it poſſible, too, reſum'd ſhe, in a Rage, that you can think me ſo ſtupid to look on that as a Proof of Love, which is the groſſeſt Affront in your Power to offer! An Affront! cry'd he, my deareſt *Zulica!* Little do you know of Love, if you think either of us ought to bluſh at what has happen'd! I will venture to ſay more; that thoſe you have honour'd with your Tenderneſs, muſt have lov'd you very little, if you have not found them all as unfortunate as myſelf.

Nay, nay, Sir, I find it's time to be going, ſaid ſhe, riſing; if you talk at this Rate, I muſt leave you to yourſelf: I cannot bear ſuch ridiculous, odious Stuff any longer! I perceive, Madam, it is offenſive to you, anſwer'd he, and, I confeſs, I am not a little ſurpriz'd to find it has ſuch an Effect on you; but, what is infinitely more ſo to me, is your dwelling ſo very much on my Guilt. To be plain, a raw, unexperienc'd Woman, indeed, might eaſily be ex-

cus'd in being terribly ſhock'd at ſuch an Adventure: But that you ſhould put your ſelf on a foot with one, who has never ſeen any thing! Upon my Word, it's unpardonable! as you ſay, ſaid ſhe, I muſt be weak to the laſt Degree not to delighted with it! and I wonder at myſelf for not having yet made my Acknowledgements for the ſingular Impreſſion I have made on you! Railery apart, ſaid he, going to riſe---- I'll inſtantly give you a Proof I am not in the wrong. No more of your Nonſenſe, I beſeech you, cry'd ſhe--- I inſiſt you keep where you are--- Unjuſt, as your Orders are, I will obey them, and keep myſelf at a Diſtance, ſince you'll have it ſo--- True, reply'd ſhe --- that will certainly be more commodious to you; but you may yet do better, and that is to ſay no more about it; for really you will never find me weak enough to be perſuaded, that the ſtronger a Lover's Paſſion is, the leſs he can expreſs it to the Object of his Wiſhes.

That is to ſay, Madam, you and I are directly of oppoſite Opinions, reſum'd he, with an indolent Air--- Directly, return'd ſhe--- I've a perfect Conviction of the Matter ----- Then, poſitively, Madam, you may boaſt of being a Woman of the leaſt Delicacy

cacy of any I know; and, if I did not love you to ſuch a Degree, that I cannot name the Thing under Heaven capable of tearing me from you, I muſt confeſs, your manner of thinking, in this, would take me for ever from you. I ſhould wonder, indeed, ſaid ſhe, if it pleas'd you!

O! no, Madam--- reſum'd he, with great Coldneſs, I'm not ſo much intereſted as you are pleas'd to imagine, to declare myſelf an Enemy to it; but let me obſerve, it is univerſally acknowledg'd, and ever was in all Ages, that the more we are in love, the leſs uſe we have of our Senſes; and that it is only for Hearts of a groſſer Mould, and incapable of truly taſting the Luxury of Paſſion, to poſſeſs themſelves of thoſe Moments, in which you have ſeen me ſo diſtant from myſelf. If the Expectation of Happineſs is capable of diſturbing a Lover, what muſt the approach of thoſe charming Minutes he ſo ardently wiſh'd for, produce in him! How much muſt the Soul have been impair'd by precedent Tranſports! And, tho' the Diſorder you reproach me with, is as diſobliging to a Woman of Senſe, as Coldneſs of Blood, which, perhaps, for want of diſtinguiſhing, you take to be my Caſe--- But tell me, frankly, added he, going

ing to throw himſelf at her Feet, Is it poſſible it can be the firſt time that you . . . . . Ah ! Heavens ! Ceaſe your odious Pleaſantry, interrupted ſhe—— let me alone—— I'll go this Inſtant, and never ſee you while I breathe,—— Hold, *Zulica !* ſaid he to her, leading her towards me, ſhall I never make you ſenſible, that by the Manner of your treating my Misfortune, you ſeem to be conſcious of not being able, with all your Charms, to put a Period to it ?

Whether the nice Diſtinction of *Mazulhim* diſpos'd *Zulica* to Compaſſion, or the great Reputation he had acquir'd for Wit, made her take every thing for granted he ſaid, ſhe ſuffer'd herſelf to be convey'd upon me, making that faint Reſiſtance, which is rather an Incentive, than an Impediment. By degrees, *Mazulhim* gain'd greater Advantages, and, at laſt, found himſelf in the ſame Circumſtances, that had before deceiv'd *Zulica*, and given her ſo much Subject of Complaint.

Already diſordered by the Tranſports of *Mazulhim*, ſhe began vehemently to wiſh ſhe might not find in him ſuch Inſtability as at firſt ; already even ſhe was high in Expectation, when *Mazulhim*, more delicate than ever, cruelly failed her in her ſofteſt Hopes ; and ſhe

was

was the more enraged, as (Vanity apart) he then would have done her a Pleaſure to behave otherwiſe.

Why does not he then come to a Concluſion, ſaid the Sultan? I'm as much diſpleas'd at him, as ſhe can be—— It is not becauſe I have thought fit to eſpouſe *Zulica*, but I aſk you, if ſuch Uſage is to be borne, and whether it would not try the Patience of a *Dervife?* He had much need, to perſuade her to wait, with a Vengeance! *Amanzei*, this is what I did not expect from you— If you go on thus, I ſhall begin to think you bear an Ill-will to the Woman; and, to be plain, I ſhould not take it well of you; that is, I ſhould take it very ill. Were I to frame a Tale for your Majeſty, anſwer'd *Amanzei*, it would be eaſy for me to accommodate it to your Taſte; but you will pleaſe to remember, I am only relating what I have ſeen, and cannot, without deviating from Truth, give *Mazulhim* a different Procedure from that he really had. Oh! what a Dolt was this ſame *Mazulhim*! cry'd *Schah-Baham*—— And how provok'd I am at him! But I can't conceive, ſaid the Sultaneſs, why you ſhould be ſo angry at him: He did not do it on purpoſe, no more than you. Who? he! by my Faith, re-

ſum'd

ſum'd he, I know nothing of it; but, ſurely, he muſt be a very ſad Fellow! Beſides, ſaid the Sultaneſs again, this *Zulica* you have taken ſuch a Fancy to, was one of the greateſt . . . . . ſoftly, I beſeech you, Madam, interrupted he; think what you pleaſe, but let me hear no Ill of her—— If I take any one under my Protection, it is ſufficient, I know, to make you diſpleas'd at it—— This is always your Way; and it ſhocks me, I muſt tell you—— I can't help it, anſwer'd the Sultaneſs—— I ſhall ſpeak my Mind, notwithſtanding; nor ſhould I be at all aſtoniſh'd, if this *Zulica* you like ſo well today, ſhould be as much your Abhorence tomorrow—— That remains, as yet, doubtful, and is more than you can tell, reſum'd the Sultan—— I don't take Prejudices, like you, I'd have you think—— And, till that happens, let us hear a little more of her Hiſtory.

Zulica ſeem'd burſting with Rage at this new Indignity to her Charms. Really, Sir, ſays ſhe to him, puſhing him from her, diſdainfully—— If you mean this as a Deference to me, I muſt tell you it's very ill-plac'd—— I ſhould be the firſt to ſay ſo, anſwer'd he, if I thought you could once imagine yourſelf deſerving of the Miſtakes I have

have committed; but that is very visibly far from being the Case, and I readily confess myself without any Justification. When a Person knows himself then of certain Dispositions, said she, methinks he should not plague People. It is accordingly my Design to avoid it, if this Affair is attended with any Consequences, reply'd he; but you will give me leave, however, to hope the contrary — Really, Sir, said she, I would not advise you to it.

With this, she got up, snatching her Fan and Gloves, and pulling out a little Carmine Box, flew to the Glass. As she was adjusting herself with great Care, in order to put herself in *statu quo*, *Mazulhim* interrupting her little Avocations, gently begg'd her not to give herself a Trouble she would certainly be oblig'd to take over again. *Zulica* made him no other Answer than by a Look, which sufficiently satisfy'd, she gave little Credit to his Predictions; but finding he still continu'd troublesome, Bless me! said she to him, am I to be eternally teiz'd after this Manner! And can't you let People go about their Business! If you insist upon it, I must obey, answer'd he; but, if I mistake not, you promis'd to sup with me? Not that I know of, resum'd

she

ſhe —— True, ſaid he, ſmiling; I'm ſure you was not poſitive —— Well, but, ſaid ſhe, in ſhort, I'm engag'd, and beſides, its late —— That's very pleaſant, return'd he, throwing her upon me, and endeavouring, if he could not, after all, find the Means to make the Hours leſs tedious to her. Look you, *Mazulhim*, ſaid ſhe to him, greatly ſoften'd, you may believe me, if you will, but really, without Paſſion, the Part you make me act is inſupportable. I ſhould be much leſs to be pity'd, anſwer'd he, had you been more complaiſant; but you are ſo rigid! Well, ſince it is ſo, reſum'd ſhe, it would be quite barbarous to deprive you of the only Excuſe that is left you. He anſwer'd, with great Confidence, that he would readily put all his Credit on the Iſſue.

With this, ſhe ſuffer'd herſelf to be confuted by his Reaſoning, tho' rather for the ſake of having the malicious Pleaſure to aggravate his Miſtakes to the utmoſt. The more he claim'd her Compaſſion (for ſhe was not of a generous Nature) the more it rais'd her Indignation. If ſhe was piqu'd at his little ſenſibility to her Charms, it ſtabb'd her to the Soul, when ſhe found him make ſo ungrateful a Return to her

ultimate

ultimate Favours; and it was her Vanity alone, that ſupported her under the grievous Mortification. Scarce had ſhe form'd the pleaſing Hopes of Triumph, e're ſhe beheld him yielding to a ſudden Faintneſs. Oft was ſhe tempted over to renounce a Hope, which ſeem'd to preſent itſelf only to deceive her afterwards more cruelly; yet after all ſhe had done for *Mazulhim*, how could ſhe now leave him to his piteous Fate, when one Moment more, perhaps, might ſubdue his obſtinate Ingratitude? If it would have been more pleaſing for her to have ow'd all to the Tenderneſs of *Mazulhim*, the more it was for her Glory to ſnatch a ſtubborn Victory.

This Reaſoning, perhaps, was not the juſteſt that *Zulica* might have made uſe of; but for one in her Situation, it was much ſhe was able to reaſon at all.

Mazulhim, perceiving by her Looks the abſolute Neceſſity there was of diverting her Thoughts from the perverſe Coldneſs, which, ſpite of himſelf, he ſtill diſcovered, ply'd her, unceaſing, with the fineſt Speeches, and particularly enlarged with great Addreſs on the compaſſionate Part of her Character. Moſt certainly, cry'd ſhe, juſt perhaps as ſhe had conceived a higher Opinion of

of her Complacencies to *Mazulhim* — Yes-moſt certainly; it muſt be allowed I have a fine Soul!

At a Declaration ſo extremely juſt, *Mazulhim* could not contain himſelf; and *Zulica*, knowing the danger of laughing in ſome Moments, was very formally angry at him for it.

The Gaiety of *Mazulhim*, however, was not of ſuch dire Conſequences as ſhe apprehended; he began to feel himſelf releaſed from the wicked Hands of the Magicians, who till then had ſo cruelly perſecuted him; and though far from obtaining a complete Victory over them, ſhe could not forbear highly congratulating herſelf upon it, not that ſhe had ſo little Underſtanding to be deceived in the Affair; but ſhe was willing to fortify *Mazulhim* ſtill more, by her ſeeming Confidence in him — Alas! how little did ſhe know him, to think he ſtood in need of it!

Mazulhim, famous for making the moſt of all Advantages, ſcarce found himſelf relieved, before he carried his Temerity ſo far, as to believe himſelf capable of the moſt arduous Undertaking; and ſpite of all that *Zulica* could ſay, though ſhe was better able to judge of Objects than he, as being near-

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er at hand to them; ſhe could not however reſtrain him. Whether he thought a Moment's Delay might be dangerous; or whether (which is the moſt likely) he found he had no longer occaſion for her Influence, he was reſolv'd to try what had never fail'd him, ſaid he, but once, and that by the meereſt Accident in the World. *Zulica*, who was not eaſily to be impos'd on, and who, beſides, had not the worſt Opinion of herſelf of any Woman in *Agra*, pretended to be mightily aſtoniſh'd at his Preſumption, and, on the Subject of his Boldneſs, made him very handſome Remonſtances; which, however, had not their Effect; for *Mazulhim* ſtill perſiſting in his Obſtinacy, by a neceſſary Conſequence of confiding in her Charms; and, in order to humble him, ſhe yielded, like *Zephis*, to Circumſtances, which ſhe could not enough wonder at the Folly of. Oh, yes! ſaid ſhe, diſdainfully—all at once her Countenance chang'd, and, by the Glow in her Cheek, and the Emotion ſhe was in, as well as the exulting Air of *Mazulhim*, I judg'd, that what ſhe had foretold as impracticable, was a Matter of all the Facility imaginable.

Do you obſerve that, now, cry'd the Sultan—— and yet the Women are always com-

complaining and wondring at Things! well— it's good to know this— What, pray, demanded the Sultaneſs? have you made any new Diſcovery, then? Oh— I know what! anſwer'd the Sultan— If ever any Body pretends to reproach me, I know now what I have to ſay— I am very ſorry, however, for the Mortification of *Zulica*, for ſhe certainly deſerv'd it leſs than any Body— But proceed, *Emir*— There are abundance of fine Things in what you have been relating to us, which gives me a better Opinion of the reſt.

END of the Firſt PART.